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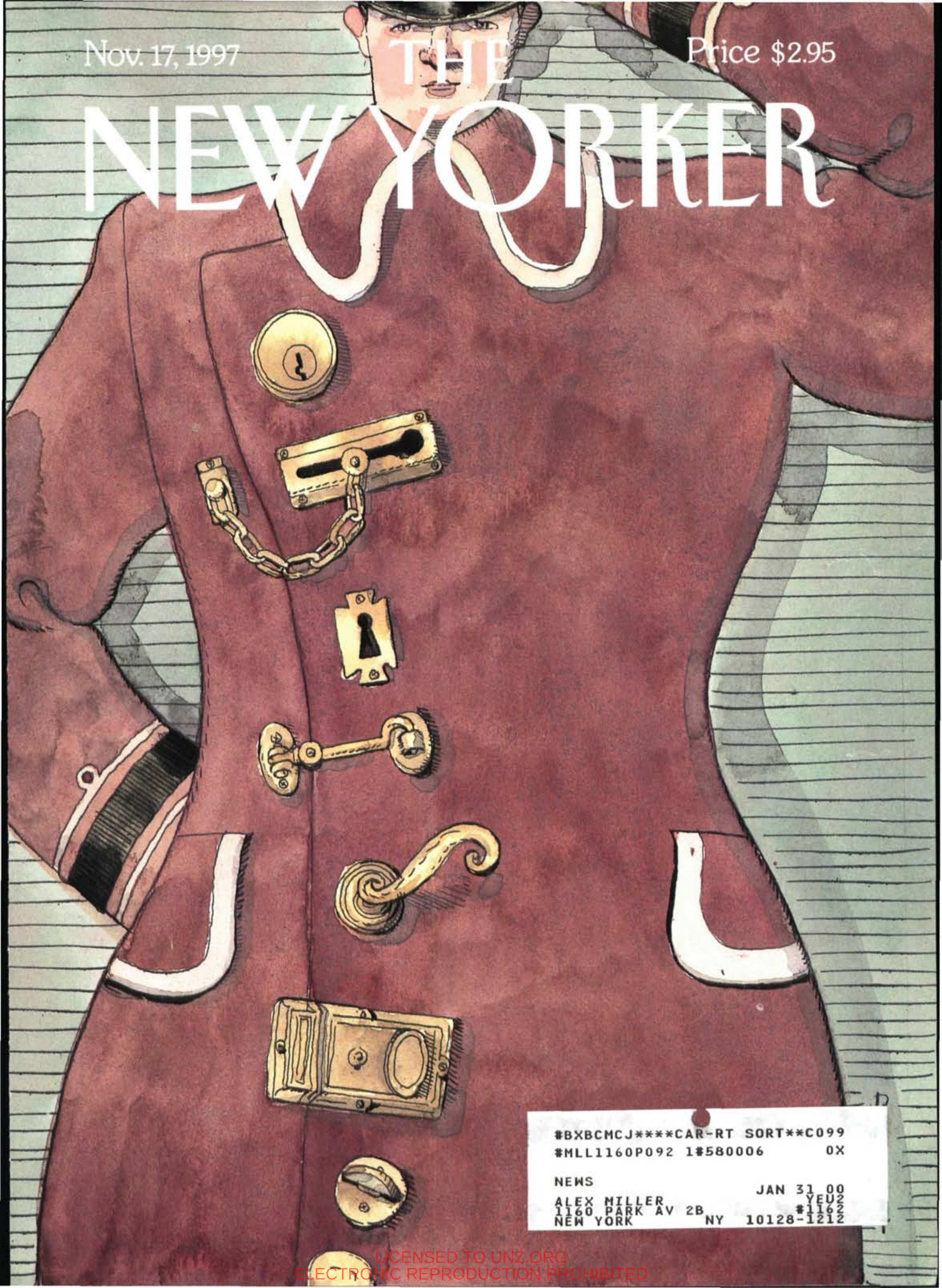

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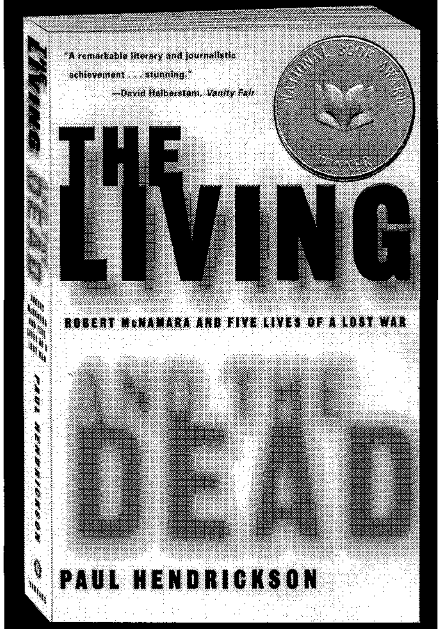
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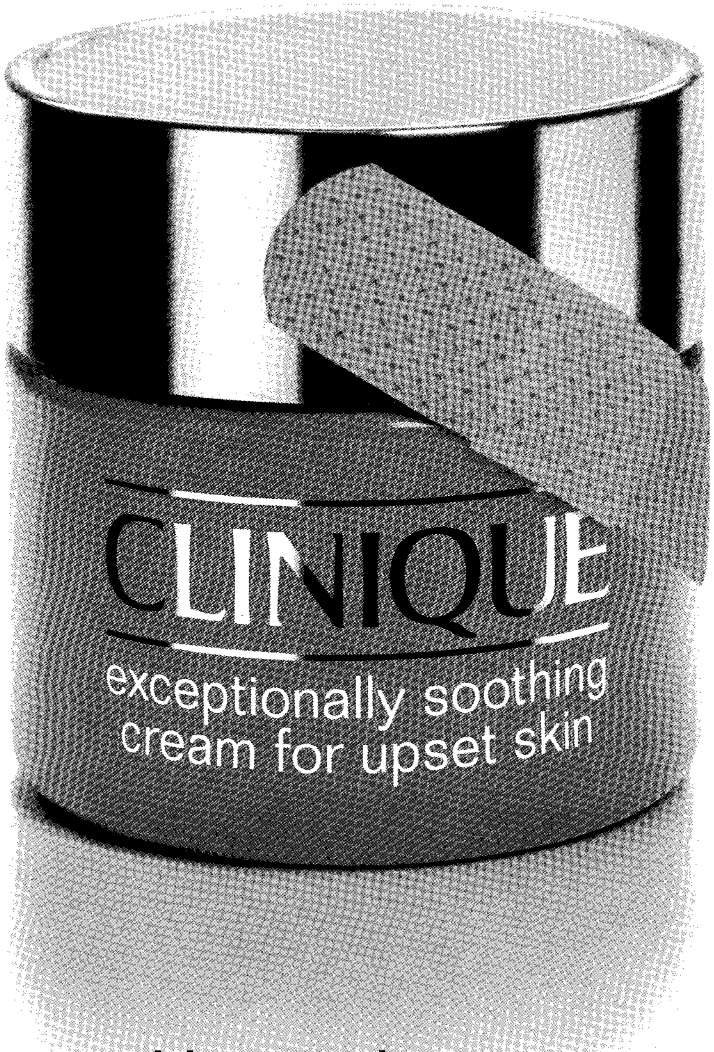

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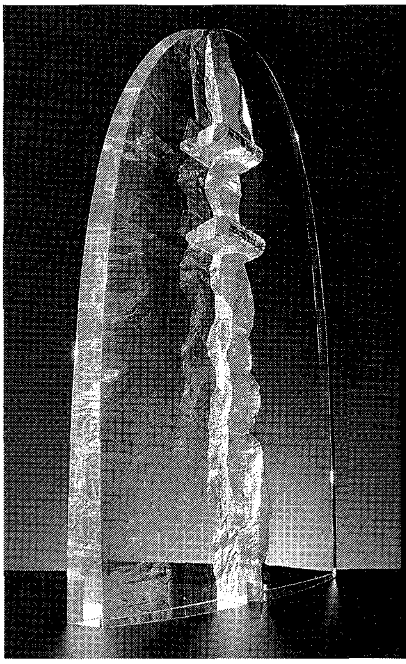
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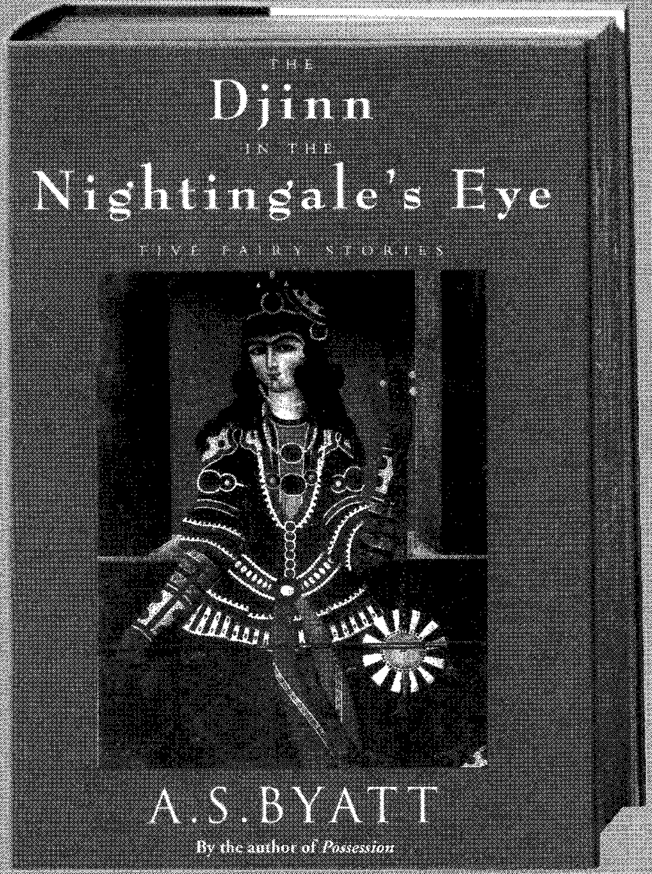

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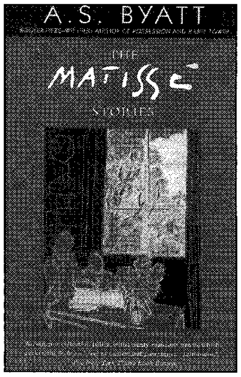

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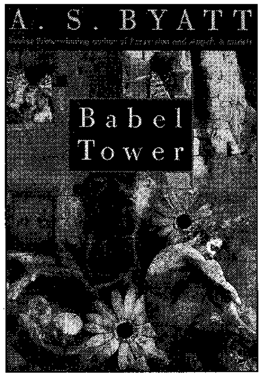

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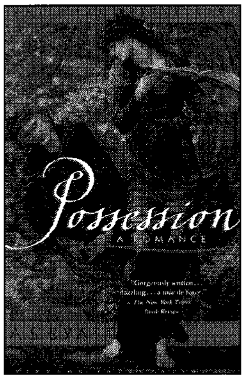

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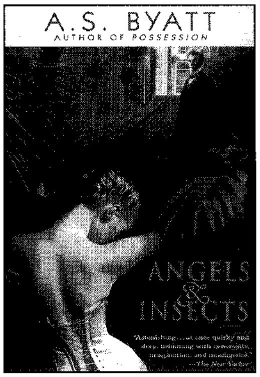

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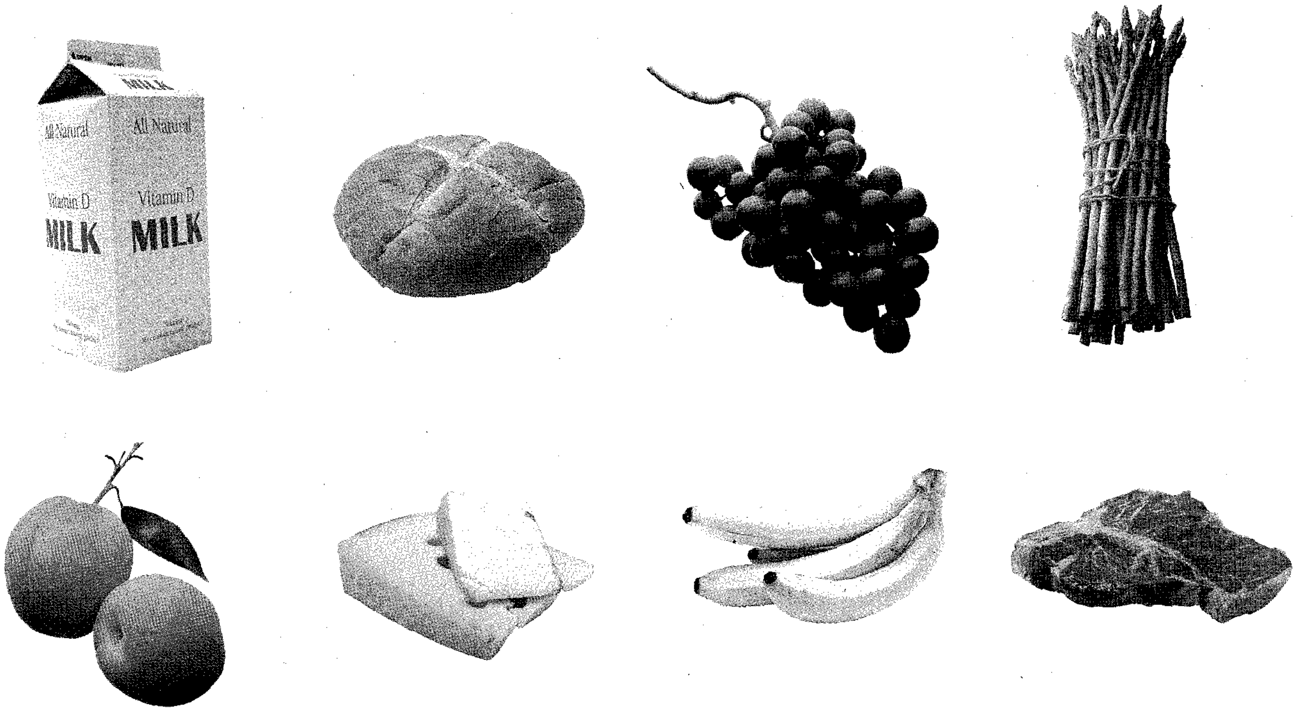
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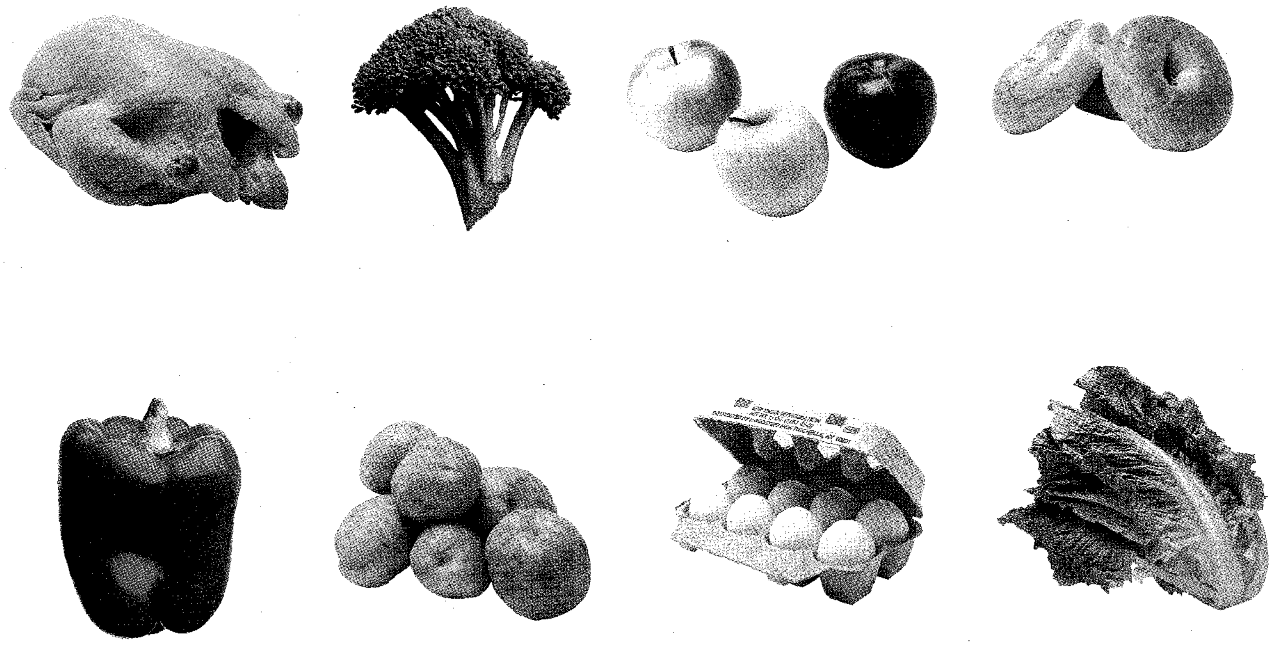

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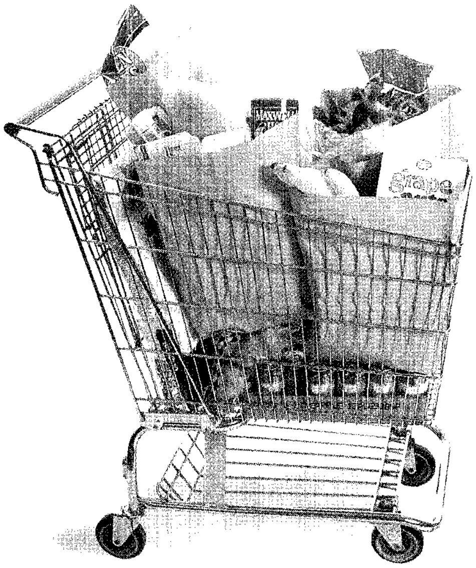

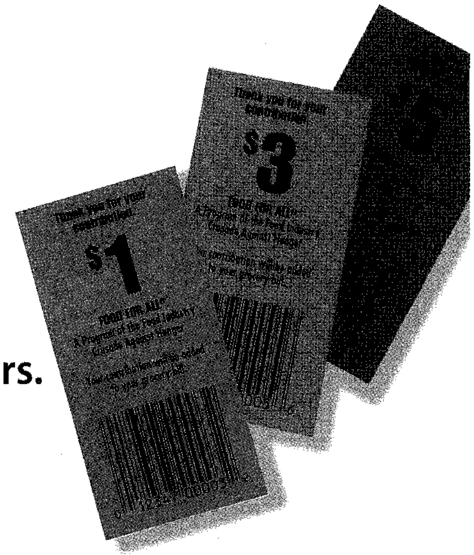

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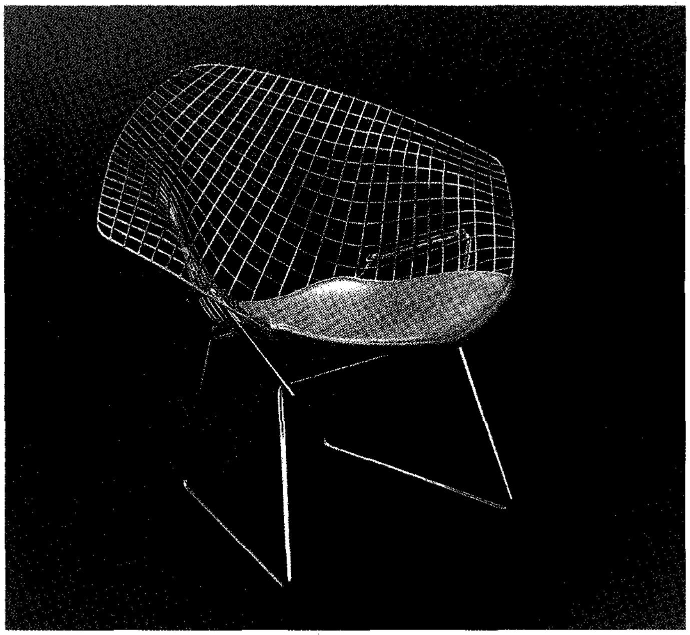

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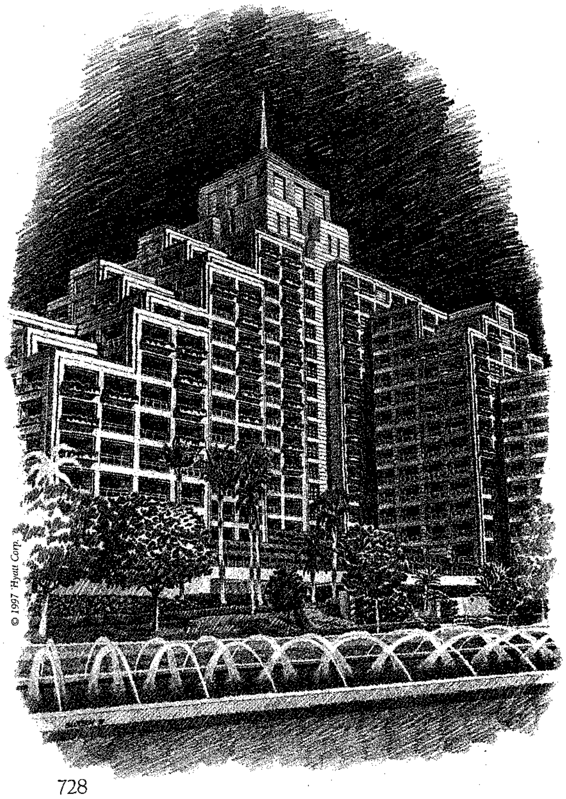
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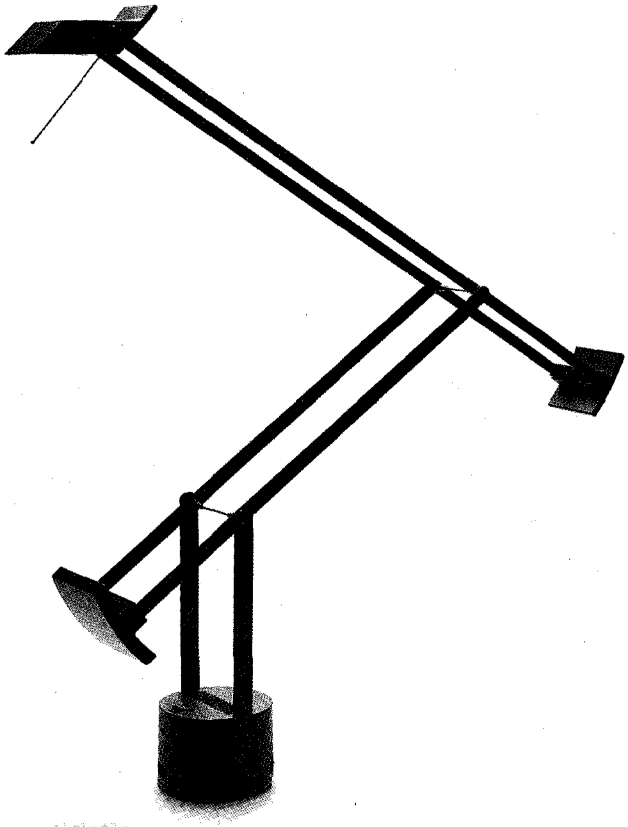

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COMMENT

TALES OF THE TAPES

Hit the "record" button, please.

LAST Thursday morning, at the opening of the George Bush Library, in College Station, Texas, the weather was splendid and the mood was mellow. Mr. Bush was at his awkwardly modest best, and an amiable camaraderie prevailed as he posed with his White House fraternity brothers Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, and Bill Clinton. This being the nineties, the Bush Library is the first institution of its kind to open simultaneously with its own Web site (http://csdl.tamu.edu/bushlib/). There the browser learns, among other things, that the library's archive will contain "over thirty-eight million pages of personal papers and official documents," all of them "housed in acid-free storage (Hollinger) boxes in a balanced humidity and temperature atmosphere."

A rich trove for historians, this. But not quite as rich as it ought to be. For what the George Bush Library will emphatically not contain—and what the Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, and Ronald Reagan libraries do not contain and the eventual Bill Clinton library will not contain—is a faithful record of what was actually said in the Oval Office and the Cabinet Room and on the telephone by the President and his advisers as they deliberated on matters petty and great. For this state of affairs, as for soft money and cheap Chinese sneakers, we have Richard Nixon to thank.

The Nixon tapes were Nixon's undoing, of course. They are turning out, however, to be a historical resource of incalculable value. The same is true of the less extensive but still voluminous voice recordings of meetings and telephone conversations which were made by Nixon's two immediate predecessors, John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson. Just how extraordinary these materials are has become clear in recent weeks with the publication of three new books: "The Kennedy Tapes: Inside the White House During the Cuban Missile Crisis," edited by Ernest R. May and Philip D. Zelikow (Harvard); "Taking Charge: The Johnson White House Tapes, 1963-1964," edited by Michael R. Beschloss (Simon & Schuster); and "Abuse of Power: The New Nixon Tapes," edited by Stanley I. Kutler (Free Press). All three are riveting, and, taken together, they show the power and variety of what amounts to a new kind of history. "The Kennedy Tapes," drawn from transcripts of working meetings between October 16 and October 29, 1962, has the advantage of being a suspenseful, self-contained narrative of a single intense episode—the Cuban mis-

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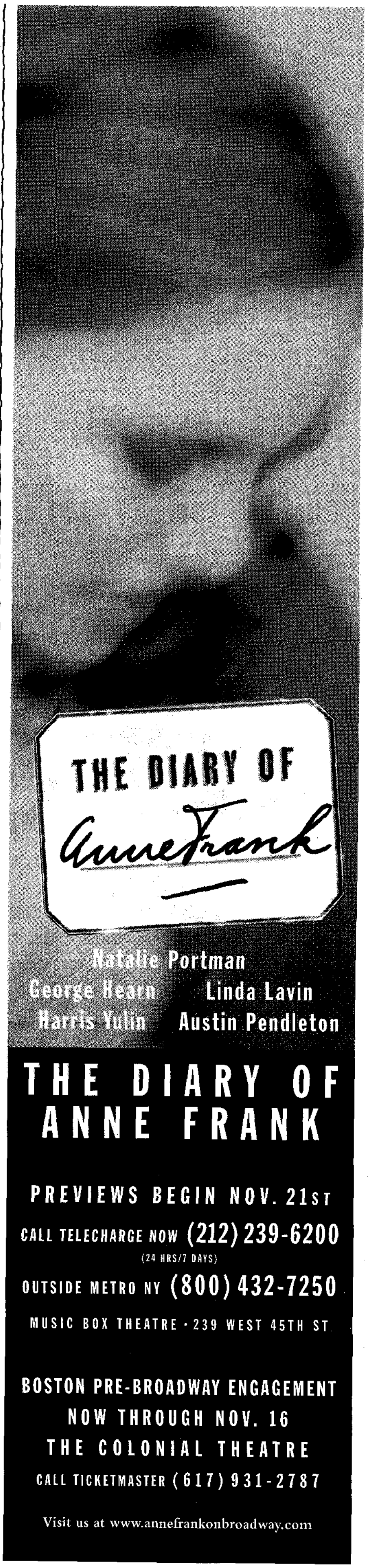
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sile crisis, which in retrospect stands out as the most dangerous moment of the Cold War. In the cauldron of the crisis, the forty-five-year-old President emerges as everything his hagiographers have proclaimed him to be: calm, lucid, commanding, far-seeing. "Taking Charge" shapes itself into a character study: it consists almost entirely of telephone transcripts, and they give it a wonderfully intimate focus. As Johnson talks one on one with a staggering range of people—his wife, his closest assistants, his tailor, congressmen, relatives, civil-rights leaders, Cabinet members, columnists, J. Edgar Hoover, Robert Kennedy, and on and on—he is variously wheedling, ribald, resentful, scheming, gloomy, gleeful, gossipy, comforting, and stern. Vietnam is barely an annoyance at the beginning, but as the story progresses Johnson more and more often expresses vexation and bafflement over the still embryonic war, foreshadowing the nightmare that we know will eventually destroy him.

It was a long wait, but "Abuse of Power" finally, and satisfyingly, slakes the thirst for detail that was awakened on July 16, 1973, when a White House aide named Alexander Butterfield told the Senate Watergate committee of the existence of Nixon's elaborate, voice-activated taping system. No wonder Nixon fought so desperately against the release of the Watergate tapes: just one of them was sufficient to force his resignation, and the rest—two hundred hours' worth, pried loose a year ago as the result of a lawsuit brought against the National Archives by Public Citizen and Professor Kutler—turn out to confirm everything you ever suspected, and more.

The criminality on display is frankly voluptuous, and it begins in the first line of the book's first conversation, which was taped a full year before the Watergate break-in. The curtain rises on Nixon, H. R. Haldeman, John Ehrlichman, and Henry Kissinger in the Oval Office. They are talking about the Pentagon Papers, which were published a few days earlier:

> HALDEMAN: You maybe can blackmail Johnson on this stuff.
> PRESIDENT NIXON: What?
> HALDEMAN: You can blackmail Johnson on this stuff and it might be worth doing.

Nixon needs no urging. He quickly demands that a plan to knock over the Brookings Institution—a private think tank he suspects may have possession of documents embarrassing to his predecessor—be revived:

> PRESIDENT NIXON: . . . I want it implemented. . . . Goddamnit, get in and get those files. Blow the safe and get it.

Blow the safe, indeed. Throughout the six hundred-plus pages that follow, the conversation seldom gets more elevated than this. Nixon and his assistants sound like regulars at the Ravenite Social Club. They are obsessed with breaking and entering: among the places they propose to burglarize are the National Archives (to steal more Johnson documents); the apartment of Arthur Bremer, the would-be assassin of George Wallace (to plant left-wing literature); and Nixon's own campaign headquarters (to make it look as if the Cubans did it, or the Democrats, or somebody). And as the coverup gives way to the coverup of the coverup, with Nixon and his men orchestrating all of it down to the smallest detail, "Abuse of Power" spells out subornation of perjury and obstruction of justice on a heroic scale.

The tapes from which these books have been fashioned are primary source material of a kind that is simply unprecedented, and it is almost impossible to overstate their value. They are about as close as we can come to the historian's dream of travelling in time and directly witnessing what actually happens, which is nearly always stranger, more complicated, and more disorderly than we assume—even, or perhaps especially, when the events in question have been written about ad nauseam.

The Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon tapes opened a window on the past. Watergate slammed it shut. These books make one wish that the window could be thrown open again, on different terms. By all means, tape everything, and do it openly, not secretly. Wire the White House from top to bottom, and put the results under lock and key, rigidly protected by law from congressional subpoena or citizen lawsuit, for some suitable period of time. Forty years would be about right: long enough to insure the confidentiality of decision-making but short enough to let the events of one's youth be illuminated in one's old age. As it is, those thirty-eight million pages in College Station notwithstanding, there is a coming crisis in Presidential historiography: the culture of scandal is dulling many of the basic tools of the historian. These days, a high government official can't even entrust private thoughts to a private diary without risk.

It might be argued that if a system like the one proposed here had been in place during the early seventies Nixon wouldn't have been forced from office. (In 2013, though, by way of consolation, we'd get to enjoy one hell of an eye-popping story.) But, by the same token, if the arrangements that obtain *now* had obtained then, Nixon would surely have beaten the Watergate rap—and the truth, in all likelihood, would have remained forever shrouded.

It wouldn't hurt for Presidents and their lieutenants to know that posterity was in the room with them, listening. Given the overwhelming pressures on them to think in the short term, a little pressure to consider the long term would not be out of place. History has its claims. Why not marshal them in service to the future? —HENDRIK HERTZBERG

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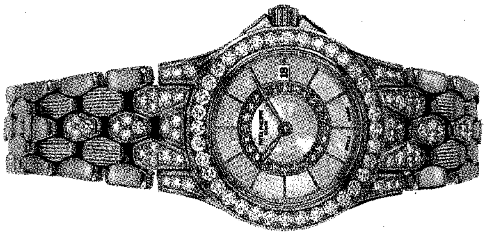

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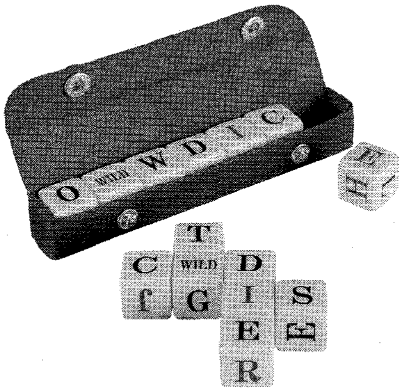

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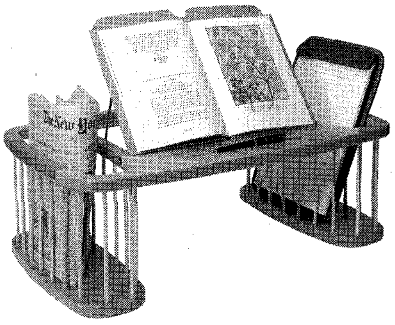

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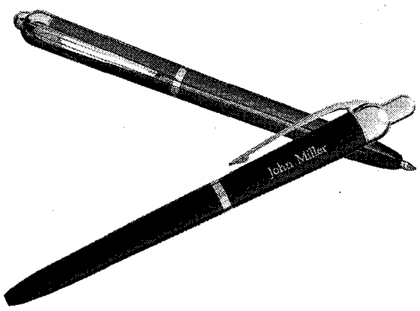

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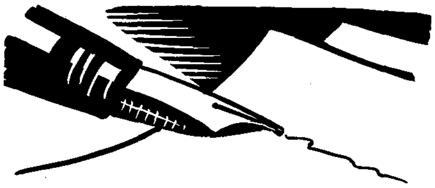

WHEN PARENTS AGE

James Atlas's "The Sandwich Generation" (October 13th), about people caring for their elderly parents and their children at the same time, prompts me to note that the last, best gift parents can give their children is to make their own arrangements to go into a retirement facility; tell their children they are going; and go. I did it, and I'm glad. The alternative—aging parents who wait until their health fails—compels their children to make difficult decisions that should not be their responsibility.

JEAN SIMS
Media, Pa.

If we did become our parents' parents when they became old, then caring for them would be a snap. We'd simply fit them into our lives and our schedules as we wished, and perhaps even discipline them. We would not agonize over decisions we'd made on their behalf, feel guilty when we had to say no to them, or experience the heartbreak of their dependence. The truth is that however infirm age may render them, our parents forever remain our parents.

VIVIAN E. GREENBERG
Princeton, N.J.

OTHER VOICES, OTHER VIEWS

George Plimpton's oral biography of the time that Truman Capote spent in Kansas writing "In Cold Blood" ("Capote's Long Ride," October 13th) describes him as sobbing from Kansas to New York after the executions of Perry Smith and Dick Hickock, in 1965. A little more than a year after that, on July 21, 1966, in testimony in front of the Senate subcommittee that I was a press secretary to, Capote said that "we cannot—and I did not—confuse a sense of pity with a sense of justice." He strongly condemned the Supreme Court's recent Miranda decision—a decision that he said would have saved their lives. If Smith and Hickock had had the right not to answer questions, Capote reasoned, they wouldn't have answered them, and their confessions would never have been obtained. He concluded, "I would pose a single, significant question: while many in our society today are wailing about the rights of the criminal suspect, why do they seem to totally ignore the rights of the victims and potential victims?" Thus Capote sounded an early version of this decade's victims'-rights debate.

STEPHAN LESHER
Katonah, N.Y.

Mr. Plimpton's article marks the first time since *The New Yorker* published "In Cold Blood," thirty-two years ago, that the magazine has acknowledged the possibility that it contains untruths. Although Plimpton and the magazine deserve credit for identifying some inaccuracies, my own research indicates that some new untruths seem to have been born, including the questionable suggestion that Capote, the only journalist known to have had access to Nancy Clutter's diary, was not treated differently from other reporters. Plimpton's article also perpetuates the mistaken notion that the Clutter murders were psychological crimes committed, as Capote put it on various occasions, after Smith spontaneously suffered "a brain explosion," "schizophrenic darkness," or "mental eclipse." But, as I showed in an article I wrote in June of 1966 for *Esquire*, Smith's confession demonstrated that he and Hickock had coolly debated who would kill Mr. Clutter. Indeed, if they had intended to leave any witnesses to their robbery, why did they go to the Clutter house equipped with rope and tape to bind and silence their victims, and a knife, shotgun, and shells with which to kill them? Despite Capote's promises that every word of his nonfiction novel was "true," the facts of the case had to accommodate his view of dramatic and, especially, ironic forms.

PHILLIP K. TOMPKINS
Professor of Communication and
Comparative Literature
University of Colorado at Boulder
Boulder, Colo.

Letters should be as brief as possible, and sent with the writer's name, address, and daytime phone number to "The Mail," The New Yorker, 20 West 43rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10036. They may be edited for length and clarity.

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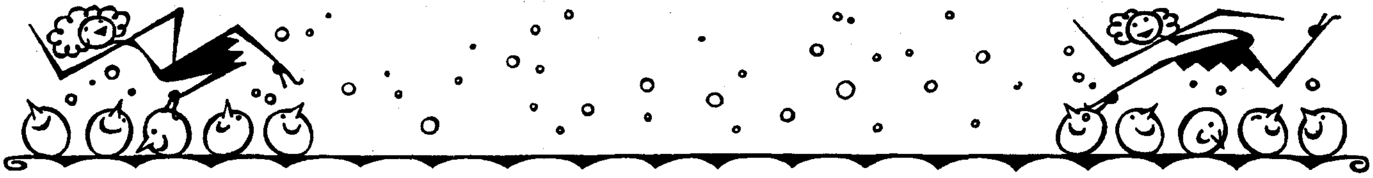

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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16	17	18				

THE THEATRE

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.)

Bashevis: Tales of I. B. Singer—David Margulies stars in an evening of three of the author's short stories ("Quotation from Klopstock," "The Yearning Heifer," and "A Wedding in Brownsville") adapted for the stage. In previews. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 354-2220.)

The Batting Cage—Two sisters (Veanne Cox and Babo Harrison) check in at a Holiday Inn with the ashes of a third, in this comedy by Joan Ackermann. Lisa Peterson is the director. Opens Nov. 12 at 8. (Vineyard Theatre, 108 E. 15th St. 353-3874.)

Cyrano de Bergerac—Frank Langella directs, and dons the schnozz in, his own adaptation of Rostand's romantic drama, from a translation by Brian Hooker. In previews. (Roundabout, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

A Dybbuk; or, Between Two Worlds—Tony Kushner's adaptation of the Yiddish folk tale stars Ron Leibman and is directed by Brian Kulick. In previews. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 260-2400.)

Flight—The Ensemble Studio Theatre presents a play by Arthur Giron, about Wilbur and Orville Wright. Jamie Richards is the director. In previews through Nov. 15. Opens Nov. 16 at 3. (549 W. 52nd St. 247-4982.)

Ivanov—Kevin Kline stars in David Hare's adaptation of Chekhov's 1887 drama, in a staging directed by Gerald Gutierrez. In previews. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

The Lion King—A cast of forty-six takes the stage in Disney's Broadway version of its animated film, directed by Julie Taymor. Choreographed by Garth Fagan. With music and lyrics by Elton John and Tim Rice. Preview on Nov. 12. Opens Nov. 13 at 6:30. (New Amsterdam, 214 W. 42nd St. 307-4100.)

A Madhouse in Goa—Judith Ivey leads the cast in a drama of intrigue by Martin Sherman ("Bent"), which takes place over two decades on two Greek islands. In previews. (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 787-3392.)

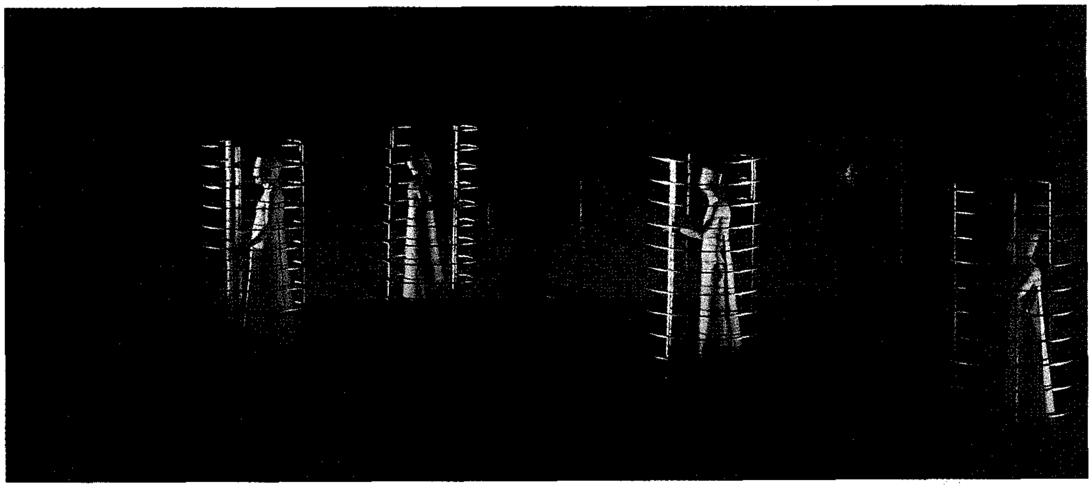
The Old Neighborhood—A trilogy of one-acts by David Mamet, with Peter Riegert, Patti LuPone, Vincent Guastaferro, Rebecca Pidgeon, and Jack Willis. In previews. (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Pride's Crossing—A ninety-year-old woman who once swam the English Channel (Cherry Jones) relives the stages of her life, in Tina Howe's new play, directed by Jack O'Brien. In previews. (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

Street Corner Symphony—A revue of music and dance from the sixties and seventies, directed by Marion J. Caffey. In previews. (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 307-4100.)

Time Rocker—Robert Wilson, Lou Reed, and Darryl Pinckney's pop opera. Nov. 12 at 7, Nov. 14-15 and Nov. 18 at 7:30, and Nov. 16 at 3. Continues through Nov. 23. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 718-636-4100.)

You ANC Nothing Yet—Pieter-Dirk Uys, a South African political satirist who performs in drag, brings his latest one-man show to the Brooklyn Academy of Music. Nov. 13 and Nov. 18 at 8, and Nov. 14-15 at 8 and 9:30. Through Nov. 22. (30 Lafayette Ave. 718-636-4100.)



Lou Reed, Robert Wilson, and Darryl Pinckney's "Time Rocker," at the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

ROBERT LESLIE

OPENED RECENTLY

The Adjustment—The Jewish Repertory Theatre presents a romantic comedy by Michael Folie. (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000. Closes Nov. 23.)

Alligator Tales—Anne Galjour, the author of and sole performer in this ambitious play about a group of eight folks in South Louisiana, is a talented storyteller, who shows real compassion for her characters and makes some good points about the reality of life in the often romanticized Cajun country. Unfortunately, the procession of natural disasters which provides the work's narrative glue eventually grows tiresome. (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

Always . . . Patsy Cline—Not quite a revue, not quite a play, this spirited and Nashville-slick celebration of the late, great country singer is, rather, a streamlined song-delivery device. Tori Lynn Palazola doesn't sound exactly like Patsy, but she's good at doing Patsy. (Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 14th St. 239-6200.)

The American Clock—Arthur Miller's 1980 play, a small-scale epic that looks back both in sorrow and in anger at the devastation of the Depression, closed on Broadway after only twelve performances; the Signature Theatre Company's revival is something to be thankful for. (555 W. 42nd St. 244-7529. Closes Nov. 16.)

As Bees in Honey Drown—J. Smith-Cameron is hilarious as a flimflam woman, in Douglas Carter Beane's comic indictment of America's obsession with fame; the script's satirical power sours only when, every once in a while, it takes itself too seriously. Mark Brokaw directed. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 239-6200.)

The Ballad of Yachiyo—Philip Kan Gotanda's drama, about a triangle involving a male artist, a young girl, and an older woman, is set in Hawaii in 1919. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 260-2400.)

Brutality of Fact—In Keith Reddin's play, the American family is indeed an institution: a low-security insane asylum. One sister has a drinking problem she's not exactly wrestling with. The other has become a zealous Jehovah's Witness; her widowed mother, who reluctantly lives with her, calls their home Rancho Jesus. The writing calls Nicky Silver's plays to mind, but here the comedy is bittersweet rather than acidly biting—it's a melanchomedy. The cast includes Scotty Bloch, Ken Marks, Rebecca Nelson, and Leslie Lyles, who is brilliantly funny as the dipsomaniacal sister. (Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. 333-4052. Closes Nov. 23.)

Defying Gravity—Jane Anderson has based her new drama on the disastrous launching, in 1986, of the space shuttle Challenger. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 239-6200.)

Filumena—Maria Tucci co-stars with Tony Amendola in her own adaptation of Eduardo De-Filippo's 1946 romantic comedy. A Blue Light Theatre Company production, directed by James Naughton. (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 239-6200.)

Fly—Joseph Edward turns in a powerhouse performance in his own play. It's billed as an exploration of black men's lives in America, but at its most affecting—comically and

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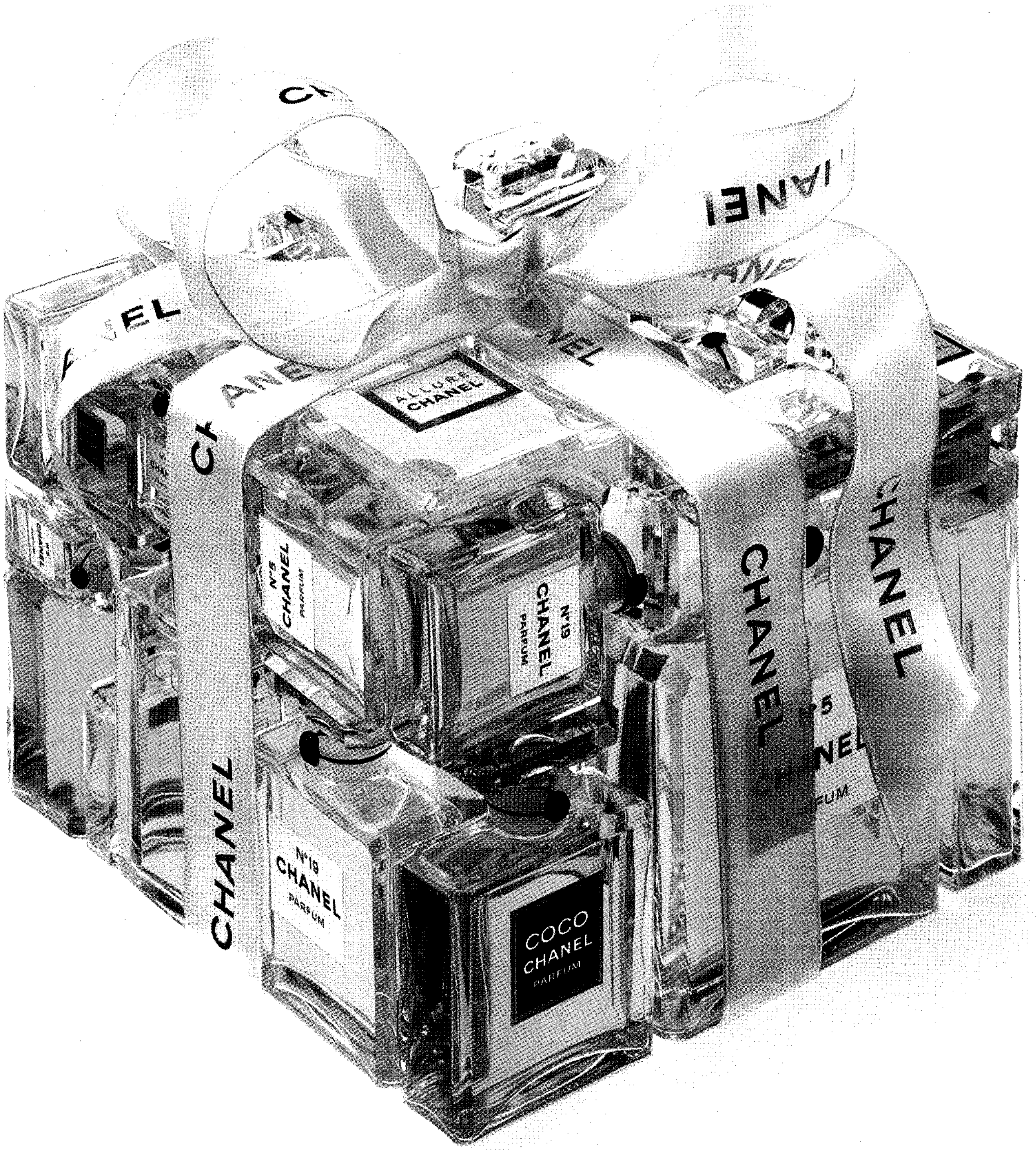
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tragically—it's also the beautifully crafted tale of *one* black man's life in America. The title character has had neither the best of luck nor the worst, but he feels the world pressing in around him, and he thinks he's found an escape. Mr. Edward has created a remarkably wide range of believable characters beyond Fly, and Arthur French and Amy-Monique Waddell—who play them all—turn in performances equal in range and power to the playwright's. The drama doesn't pretend to have all the answers: it's simply a thought-provoking explication of the questions, and one that—unusually, these days—doesn't use its humor to diffuse its pain. Directed by Wynn Handman. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 239-6200.)

The Forest—Aleksandr Ostrovsky's 1871 play tells the story of two actors, a greedy widow, some young lovers, a swindling peasant, and servants who don't know how funny they are. In other words, it pulls out just about every cliché available, and yet, in this Pearl Theatre Company production directed by Shepard Sobel, it's still fun (if a bit long). The principal source of pleasure is Richard Thompson, who, as the tragedian and main plot device, turns in a performance worthy of Garrick while remaining charmingly aware of how overwrought such acting seems to modern audiences. The rest of the cast is up to the Pearl's usual high standards, and the set, by Beowulf Boritt, is particularly evocative. (80 St. Marks Pl. 598-9802. Closes Nov. 30.)

Forever Tango—This stepchild of Vegas and Buenos Aires, created and directed by Luis Bravo, gets everything right. (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde—A powerful and surprisingly theatrical work rendered by writer-director Moisés Kaufman from edited transcripts, interposing passages from letters, Wilde's writings, and other people's memoirs and commentaries. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.)

H. Finn, Esq.—An attorney and a flimflam man take a trip up the Mississippi together, in a drama by Peter Zablotsky. (Kaufman, 534 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

I'm Still Here . . . Damn It!—Sandra Bernhard brings her new performance piece to the Westbeth Theatre Center. (151 Bank St. 307-7171. Closes Nov. 22.)

Jackie—Margaret Colin portrays Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, in Gip Hoppe's comedy, which satirizes public perceptions of events in the title character's life. (Belasco, 111 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

Long Day's Journey Into Night—A National Asian American Theatre Company revival of O'Neill's domestic tragedy. (Mint, 311 W. 43rd St. 505-3003. Closes Nov. 23.)

Menopausal Gentleman—Peggy Shaw's new one-woman show, about being a cross-dressing lesbian going through the change. Thursdays through Saturdays, through Nov. 22. (Dixon Place, 258 Bowery, near Houston St. 219-3088.)

Mojo—The rock-and-roll scene in London in 1958 is the setting for the British playwright Jez Butterworth's comedy. Neil Pepe is the director. (Atlantic, 336 W. 20th St. 645-1242.)

Proposals—In Neil Simon's new comedy, directed by Joe Mantello, a family reunites at its vacation home in the Poconos. (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

Queen Amarantha—In his new play, Charles Busch portrays a queen who won't be compromised by her sex. While the work is more serious than his usual fare, it does feature a deliciously over-the-top performance by Ruth Williamson, as a backstabbing rival of the queen's. (WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. 206-0523. Closes Nov. 16.)

Sam and Itkeh—The American Jewish Theatre begins its twenty-fifth season with a drama by Jack LaZebnick. (307 W. 26th St. 633-9797.)

The Scarlet Pimpernel—A musical version of the 1905 Baroness Orczy novel. With music by Frank Wildhorn and a book and lyrics by Nan Knighton. Peter Hunt is the director. (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 307-4100.)

Secrets Every Smart Traveler Should Know—Patrick Quinn directs James Darrah, Kathy Fitzgerald, Liz McConahay, and Michael McGrath in a comic revue inspired by the Fodor's handbook of the same title. (Triad, 158 W. 72nd St. 799-4599.)

1776—Scott Ellis's lean, lively production of Sherman Edwards and Peter Stone's still fresh 1969 musical about the drafting of the Declaration of Independence is possibly the most entertaining and the wittiest history lesson you've ever received. (Reviewed in our issue of 9/8/97.) (Roundabout, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400. Closes Nov. 16.)

Side Show—The most salient feature of this new musical, based on the story of Violet and Daisy Hilton, Siamese twins who grew up in the world of carnivals and became a vaudeville act in the thirties, is its lack of ambition: a promising premise is flattened by bombastic shlock rock, generically inspirational lyrics, an unimaginative set, and a book that reduces the sisters' entire existence to a pulp-romance plot. Nevertheless, most of the actors manage to carry themselves through this maze of confused intentions and slack direction with dignity. (11/3/97) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

Sketches on Morning, Noon & Night—Spalding Gray presents his latest monologue, a work in progress. Mondays, through Dec. 22. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

Tell-Tale—Theatre Couture's comic thriller puts a drag spin on Edgar Allan Poe. Sherry Vine and Jackie Beat are the stars. (Cherry Lane Theatre, 38 Commerce St. 239-6200.)

Thérèse Raquin—The Classic Stage Company opens its thirtieth season with Neal Bell's adaptation of Zola's 1867 novel, starring Elizabeth Marvel in the title role. David Esbjornson is the director. (136 E. 13th St. 677-4210. Closes Nov. 23.)

Three Days of Rain—After the death of a famous architect, his son and daughter uncover a mysterious legacy, in a drama by Richard Greenberg. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

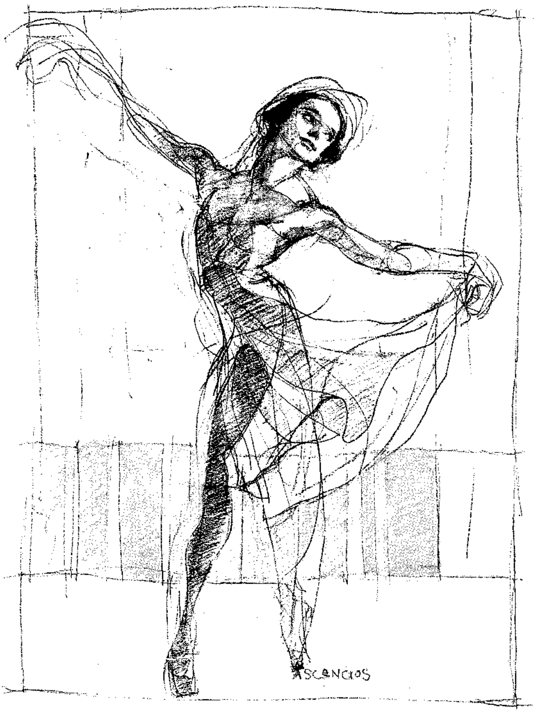
Triumph of Love—This musical adaptation of the 1732 Marivaux farce brims over with intelligence, feeling, musicality, and wit. James Magruder's rich, bawdy book is perfectly in tune with the theme of romantic foolishness; Jeffrey Stock, who wrote the music, makes a remarkable Broadway début; and Susan Birkenhead's lyrics are even more remarkable: incisive, funny, and poignant, they call to mind the songs of Rodgers and Hart and of Comden and Green. Under the direction of Michael Mayer, the cast of seven is superb; the characters are more or less stock types, but the actors, led by Betty Buckley and F. Murray Abraham, as a self-deluded sister and brother, bring them to full ripeness. The others are Nancy Opel, Kevin Chamberlin, and Roger Bart (in plump, juicy second-banana parts), Christopher Sieber (as a tall, handsome prince), and Susan Egan (as a perky princess, equal parts Puck and Peter Pan). (11/3/97) (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Two Pianos, Four Hands—Canadian keyboardists Ted Dykstra and Richard Greenblatt perform both classical and pop selections while recounting their years of musical training, in a comedy they cowrote. Directed by Gloria Muzio. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)

The Water Children—The central character in Wendy MacLeod's play is an actress in her thirties who finds herself caught, in a very personal way, in the political debate about abortion rights. On the one hand, she has a roommate who is militantly pro-choice; on the other, she has made a TV commercial for an anti-abortion group (she needed the money) and become involved with its director. If the scenario is a bit schematic, the play is never dogmatic (even when some of the characters are), and its heart and mind are in the right place—a place, that is, where difficult questions have no easy answers. The good cast, featuring Wendy Makkena, Joyce Reehling, Dierdre Lovejoy, Michael Mastro, and Kevin Isola, is directed by David Petrarca. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Closes Nov. 16.)

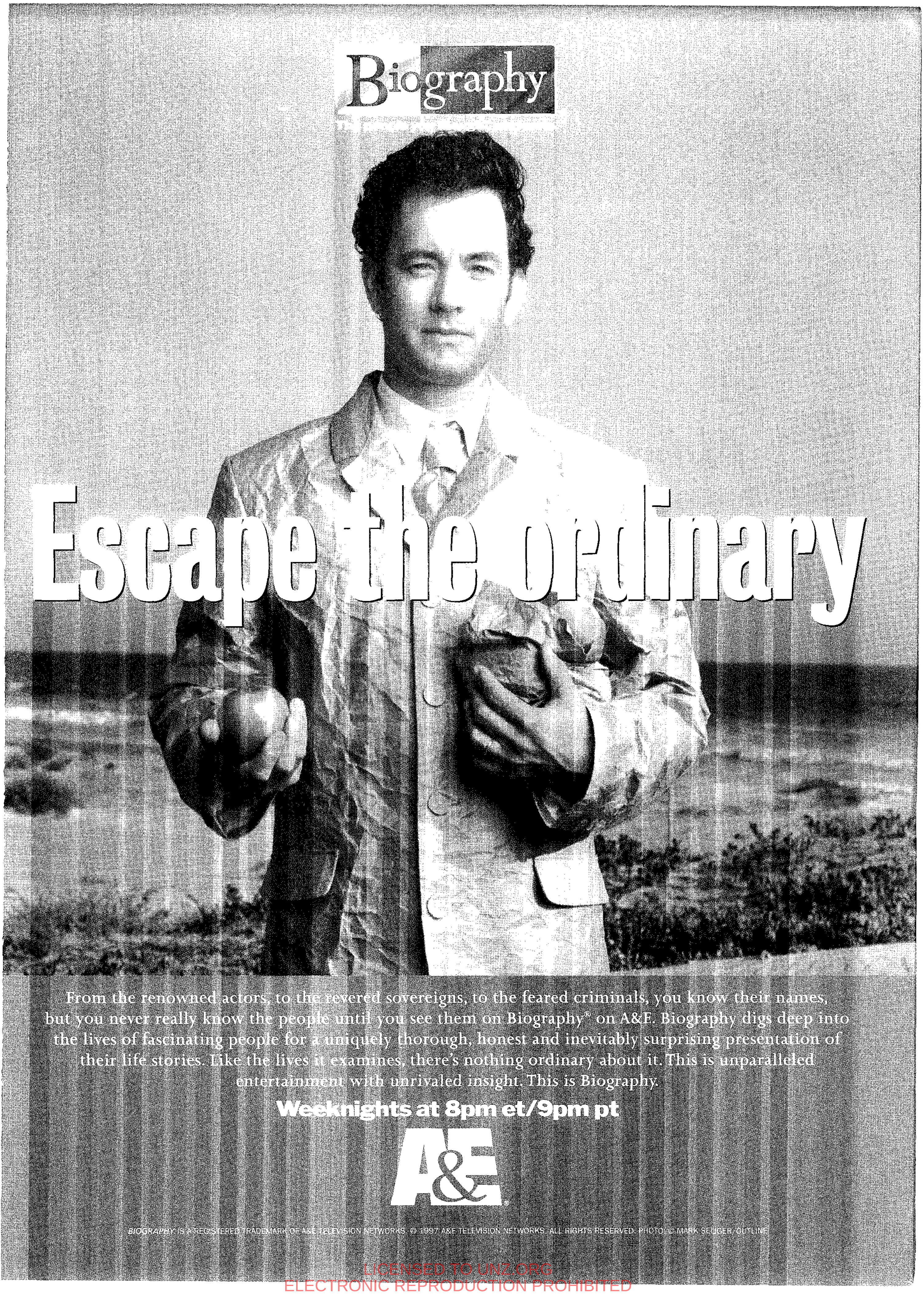
LONG RUNS

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST: Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4100. . . . **BLUE MAN GROUP/TUBES:** Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. . . . **BRING IN DA NOISE, BRING IN DA FUNK:** Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. 239-6200. . . . **CATS:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **CHICAGO:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . . **FORBIDDEN BROADWAY STRIKES BACK!:** Stardust, Broadway at 51st St. 239-6200. . . . **A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE FORUM:** St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **GRANDMA SYLVIA'S FUNERAL:** SoHo Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. 691-1555. . . . **HOWARD CRABTREE'S WHEN PIGS FLY:** Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-6200. . . . **HOW I LEARNED TO DRIVE:** Century, 111 E. 15th St. 239-6200. . . . **I LOVE YOU, YOU'RE PERFECT, NOW CHANGE:** Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 239-6200. . . . **JEKYLL & HYDE:** Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE KING AND I:** Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 307-4100. . . . **THE LAST NIGHT OF BALLYHOO:** Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 307-4100. . . . **LATE NITE CATECHISM:** St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St. 279-4200. . . . **THE LIFE:** Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200. . . . **MERE MORTALS:** John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200. . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **MISS SAIGON:** Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. . . . **PERFECT CRIME:** Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 695-3401. . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **RENT:** Nederlander, 208 W. 41st St. 921-8000. . . . **SMOKEY JOE'S CAFÉ:** Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200. . . . **STOMP:** Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at St. Marks Pl. 477-2477. . . . **TITANIC:** Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 307-4100. . . . **TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING:** St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St. 239-6200.



Alessandra Ferri returns to A.B.T. (see Dance).

N. ASCENCIOS



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DANCE

American Ballet Theatre—Nov. 12 at 8: "Drink to Me Only with Thine Eyes," "Fall River Legend," and "Theme and Variations." . . . ¶ Nov. 13 at 8: "Theme and Variations," "Fall River Legend," and "Fancy Free." . . . ¶ Nov. 14 at 8: "Drink to Me Only with Thine Eyes," "Cruel World," and "Theme and Variations." . . . ¶ Nov. 15 at 2: One highlight of A.B.T.'s fall engagement is the return, after three seasons, of the Milanese ballerina Alessandra Ferri, a dancer so expressive that she conveys, with only a twist in the curve of her ankle and arch, everything that an ingénue does with a blush. This week, Ferri appears in two works, a new duet, "In Volo," choreographed for her and Ethan Stiefel by Jean-Christophe Maillot, and Sunday evening's "Fall River Legend," the Agnes de Mille version of the Lizzie Borden story. "In Volo" (on this afternoon's program along with "Drink to Me Only with Thine Eyes," "Remanso," and "Cruel World") runs for sixteen intense minutes—"It couldn't last a minute longer," she says—and it is *not*, she insists, abstract: "I don't really believe in abstract. It's impossible to make and impossible to dance." She prefers to say that "In Volo" "is not really a story, but it has a soul." . . . ¶ Nov. 15 at 8: "Bruch Violin Concerto No. 1," "Fall River Legend," and "Fancy Free." . . . ¶ Nov. 16 at 2: "Drink to Me Only with Thine Eyes," "Some Assembly Required," "Remanso," and "Cruel World." . . . ¶ Nov. 16 at 7:30: "Theme and Variations," "Fall River Legend," and "Fancy Free." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

Ballet: The Daring Project—To launch their company, the choreographer Margo Sappington and the principal dancer Valentina Kozlova recruited talent from the Bolshoi, Joffrey, and Kirov Ballets, among other troupes, and set new work on these transported stars. Now in its sophomore season, the company expands its repertory with more new work and classical pas de deux. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Nov. 11-14 at 8, Nov. 15 at 2 and 8, and Nov. 16 at 2 and 7:30.)

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The Music of Jean Sibelius

December 1 through 15

A major retrospective of this symphonic master. Nine events including long-time Sibelius champion Sir Colin Davis and the London Symphony Orchestra.

Avery Fisher Hall
London Symphony Orchestra
Sir Colin Davis, conductor
Katarina Dalayman, soprano
(U.S. Debut)
Symphony No.4; Songs
Symphony No.7
Tickets: $45/35/25
Friday, December 5 at 8:00

Stanley Kaplan Penthouse
Sibelius Symposium
10:00–10:40 The Life and Music of Jean Sibelius
11:00–1:00 The Development of a Voice: Influences on Sibelius
2:00–3:30 The Controversies Surrounding Sibelius
4:00–5:00 The Legacy of Sibelius
Admission to Northern Lights ticket holders only
Saturday, December 6

Avery Fisher Hall
London Symphony Orchestra
Sir Colin Davis, conductor
Lemminkäinen's Return
Symphony No.3; Symphony No.5
Pre-concert lecture by James Hepokoski at 2:00, Kaplan Penthouse
Tickets: $45/35/25
Sunday, December 7 at 3:00

Avery Fisher Hall
London Symphony Orchestra
Sir Colin Davis, conductor
Kyoko Takezawa, violin
The Swan of Tuonela
Violin Concerto
Symphony No.2
Pre-concert lecture by Robert Layton at 6:30, Avery Fisher Hall
Tickets: $45/35/25
Monday, December 8 at 7:30

The London Symphony Orchestra presentation is sponsored by Takeda Chemical Industries, Ltd.

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For tickets to all Sibelius Festival concerts, come to the Avery Fisher Hall box office or call CenterCharge 212-721-6500

Russell Maliphant—This company, which closes this season's British dance festival, presents "Unspoken," a duet for Maliphant and James DeMaria. (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Nov. 13-15 at 8.)

Limón Dance Company—For the second New York engagement of its fiftieth-anniversary season, the company mounts two larger works, "Missa Brevis" and "The Winged," accompanied by a hundred-member chorus and a chamber ensemble. (Riverside Church, Riverside Dr. at 120th St. 870-6784. Nov. 13-15 at 8 and Nov. 16 at 3.)

Dance Women/Living Legends—Three arts organizations (one apiece from Brooklyn, Manhattan, and Newark) join forces to honor five African-American dance companies and the women who run them: Jeraldyne Blunden (Dayton Contemporary Dance), Joan Myers Brown (Philadanco), Cleo Parker Robinson (Cleo Parker Robinson Dance Theatre), Lula Washington (Lula Washington Dance Theatre), and Ann Williams (Dallas Black Dance Theatre). All five companies will perform; the list of choreographers involved is like a *Who's Who* of black dance. "We threw out the idea as a dream, not knowing anybody would pick it up," Robinson says, and Williams adds, "For the five of us, it says, 'Amen.'" (Nov. 13-14 at 8: BAM's Majestic Theatre, 651 Fulton St., Brooklyn. 718-636-4181. . . . Nov. 15 at 3 and 8: Davis Hall, City College, Convent Ave. at 134th St. 650-6900. . . . Nov. 16 at 3: New Jersey Performing Arts Center, Newark. 888-466-5722.)

"A Diaghilev Celebration"—Russian dancers, including both current and former members of the Kirov and Bolshoi Ballets, mark the hundred-and-twenty-fifth birthday of the impresario with a program of excerpts from Ballets Russes works, including "Le Spectre de la Rose" and "Le Corsaire." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Nov. 17 at 8.)

NIGHT LIFE

CONCERTS

Green Day—The Ritalin-ready punk trio. (Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. 307-7171. Nov. 12 at 8.)

"Bernstein in Jazz"—Songs from "On the Town," "Candide," and "West Side Story," performed by the Carnegie Hall Jazz Band, with help from Dave Grusin, Gloria Estefan, and Jonathan Butler. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Nov. 13 at 8.)

Lisa Stansfield—The soulful pop diva best known for her 1990 smash hit, "All Around the World." (Supper Club, 240 W. 47th St. 921-1940. Nov. 13 at 8.)

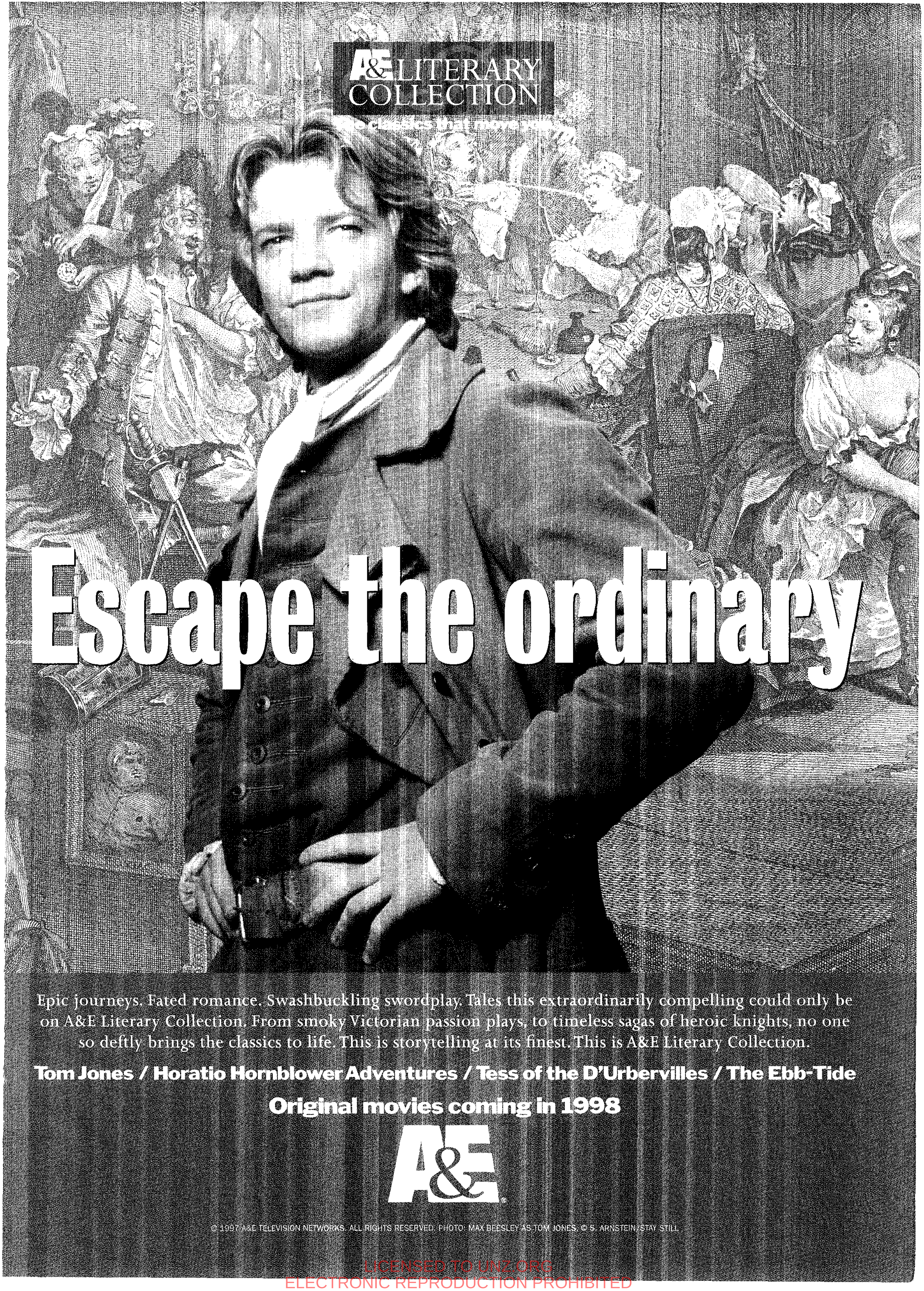
Matchbox 20—With sales of "Yourself or Someone Like You," a début collection of power ballads and midtempo misery, at more than two million copies, this earnestly strident band may be Florida's biggest contribution to culture since Epcot Center. (Hammerstein Ballroom, Manhattan Center, 311 W. 34th St. 564-4882. Nov. 13 at 8:30.)

Ruth Brown—The canny and capable R. & B. singer. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. Nov. 14 at 8.)

"A Tribute to Muddy Waters"—A guitar-driven homage to the master of understated blues, with Pinetop Perkins, Luther (Guitar Junior) Johnson, Bob Margolin, Jerry Portnoy, Calvin (Fuzz) Jones, and Willie (Big Eyes) Smith. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Nov. 14-15 at 8.)

Chemical Brothers—This excellent British electronica duo combines the tried-and-true grooves of funk with several thick layers of rock guitar (digitally sampled, of course) and various other sonic weirdnesses. (Hammerstein Ballroom, Manhattan Center. Nov. 14-15 at 9:30.)

The Transparent Quartet—What a pleasure to revel in the work of the pioneering French film director Georges Méliès (1861-1938), who sent chills down his viewers' spines by exploiting the barest of film techniques and—gasp—his imagination. The Transparent Quar-



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tet, led by the singular saxophonist and composer Phillip Johnston, will provide original music for the director's glorious short films, in a program that should restore the magic of the movie experience to even the most jaded of audiences. (Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center. 875-5600. Nov. 15 at 6:30 and 9.)

The Cramps / Guitar Wolf—The Cramps have been making ghoulish, B-movie rockabilly for nearly two decades now, and they can still raise the dead. / Straight outta Tokyo, this trio makes amphetamine-paced retro-rock (they're Link Wray and Joan Jett idolaters) that's the perfect lead-in to the Cramps. (Roseland. Nov. 15 at 7:30.)

Rickie Lee Jones—On her latest album, "Ghostyhead," the singer takes on her oddest role yet: technodiva. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. Nov. 15 at 8.)

Ali Akbar Khan and Zakir Hussain—The problem with a concert by the master sarod player and the tabla virtuoso is that afterward all other music, Eastern or Western, tends to sound, well, puny. Transcendental experience can never be guaranteed, but the odds on having one here are pretty good. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Nov. 15 at 8.)

Betty Buckley—The singer, currently wowing them on Broadway in "Triumph of Love," journeys across the East River to perform songs from "Pippin," "Sunset Boulevard," "Cats," and other shows. (Whitman Hall, Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts, Brooklyn College. 718-951-4500. Nov. 15 at 8.)

Oumou Sangare—A twenty-nine-year-old *wassoulou* singer who is something of a national heroine in her native Mali. Her sound, unlike that of most African pop stars, is sedate and almost folky—most of her songs have just a tapestry of looping guitars, a single violin, and little percussion—and her voice is an otherworldly thrill. (Symphony Space. Nov. 16 at 7.)

Ondekoza—The Japanese *taiko* troupe whose name means "demon drummers." (Carnegie Hall. Nov. 18 at 8.)

CLUBS

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type indicates some of the more notable performers in town. Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it is always advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.)

Brownies, 169 Avenue A, at 10th St. (420-8392)—Nov. 14 features the crepuscular crunch of **CONGO NORVELL.**

Chicago B.L.U.E.S., 73 Eighth Ave., at 13th St. (924-9755)—The fine Texas bluesman **GUITAR SHORTY** is in on Nov. 14-15.

The Cooler, 416 W. 14th St. (229-0785)—The San Francisco rock collaborative **THINKING FELLERS UNION LOCAL 282** stops by on Nov. 14-15, with late-sixties electronic-music pioneers **SILVER APPLES,** the first band to play Max's Kansas City.

Fez, 380 Lafayette St. (533-7000)—Tattooed East Village folk star **DANIEL CARTIER** (Nov. 12) evokes Gen X ennui with a sweet tenor. The cocktail-lounge sophisticates **COMBUSTIBLE EDISON** swing in on Nov. 15. **JULIA FORDHAM** (Nov. 16) plays smart, vibrant dream pop. Nov. 18: Before the release of his latest album, "Never Home," it looked like **FREEDY JOHNSTON** was approaching the point where his reputation (unimpeachable) and his impressive talent (irrefutable) would make him a household name. Things didn't quite work out that way. If you're a fan of exquisitely crafted songwriting, this monthlong Tuesday residency is a great way to see one of our most gifted songwriters at work. The **MINGUS BIG BAND** still packs them in every Thursday. Dining.

The Transparent Quartet accompanies the short films of Georges Méliès, at the Walter Reade Theatre.

Irving Plaza, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—Nov. 13-15: Led by Ed Volker's hearty singing and boogie-ridden keyboard riffs, the New Orleans-based **RADIATORS** deliver bluesy rock with all the radiant gusto it deserves. Nov. 18: **RATT.** Bring on the hair spray! Heavy metal is back.

Knitting Factory, 74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—Singer-songwriter **MARK EITZEL** (Nov. 13) remains one of our finest poets of tenderloin passion and despair. Nov. 14: Veteran narrative spinner **PETER BLEGVAD** and two improv sets with **JOHN ZORN.** Nov. 15: The bouncy indie pop of **APPLES IN STEREO.** Nov. 16: **PANSY DIVISION** makes music that's sort of a cross between Green Day and Paul Lynde.

Mercury Lounge, 217 E. Houston St. (260-4700)—**THEY MIGHT BE GIANTS** continue their Thursday residency on Nov. 13. Toronto's **MOXY FRÜVOUS** offers its folk pop duty-free on Nov. 14-16. The glam pop of **NANCY BOY,** featuring the distinctive cheekbones of model turned rock star Donovan Leitch, takes over on Nov. 18.

S.O.B.'s, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—Nov. 13: Saxophonist **COURTNEY PINE** and his trio offer an evening of jazz and hip-hop. **CELIA CRUZ,** the first lady of salsa, presides on Nov. 17. A flamboyant performer (and dresser), she has an electrifying presence, unerring vocal command, and an inspired ability to improvise. Dining.

Tramps, 51 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—Nov. 12: **JONATHA BROOKE,** a singer-songwriter whose breezy wit falls somewhere between Suzanne Vega's and Christine Lavin's. Nov. 13: A concert celebrating the publication of *Rolling Stone's* new compendium of women in rock, with R. & B. legends **RUTH BROWN, WANDA JACKSON,** and **RONNIE SPECTOR,** country-blues great **LUCINDA WILLIAMS,** and a host of other artists. On Nov. 14, the blues-rocking **FABULOUS THUNDERBIRDS** get back together, but the real treat is the second opener, **ROBERT EARL KEEN.** Like his fellow Texans Steve Earle and Jimmie Dale Gilmore, this fine singer-songwriter packs a lot of hard-earned wisdom into his disarming tales of life on the road—and he has the cult following to prove it. Nov. 15: Local funk masters **MILO Z.** The fine, jangly quartet **TOAD THE WET SPROCKET** is in on Nov. 18.

Twilo, 530 W. 27th St. (268-1600)—With his flowing dreads and heavy-lidded scowl, **RONI SIZE** (Nov. 13) could easily be mistaken for a reggae star. But the chattering drum-and-

RICHARD MERKIN

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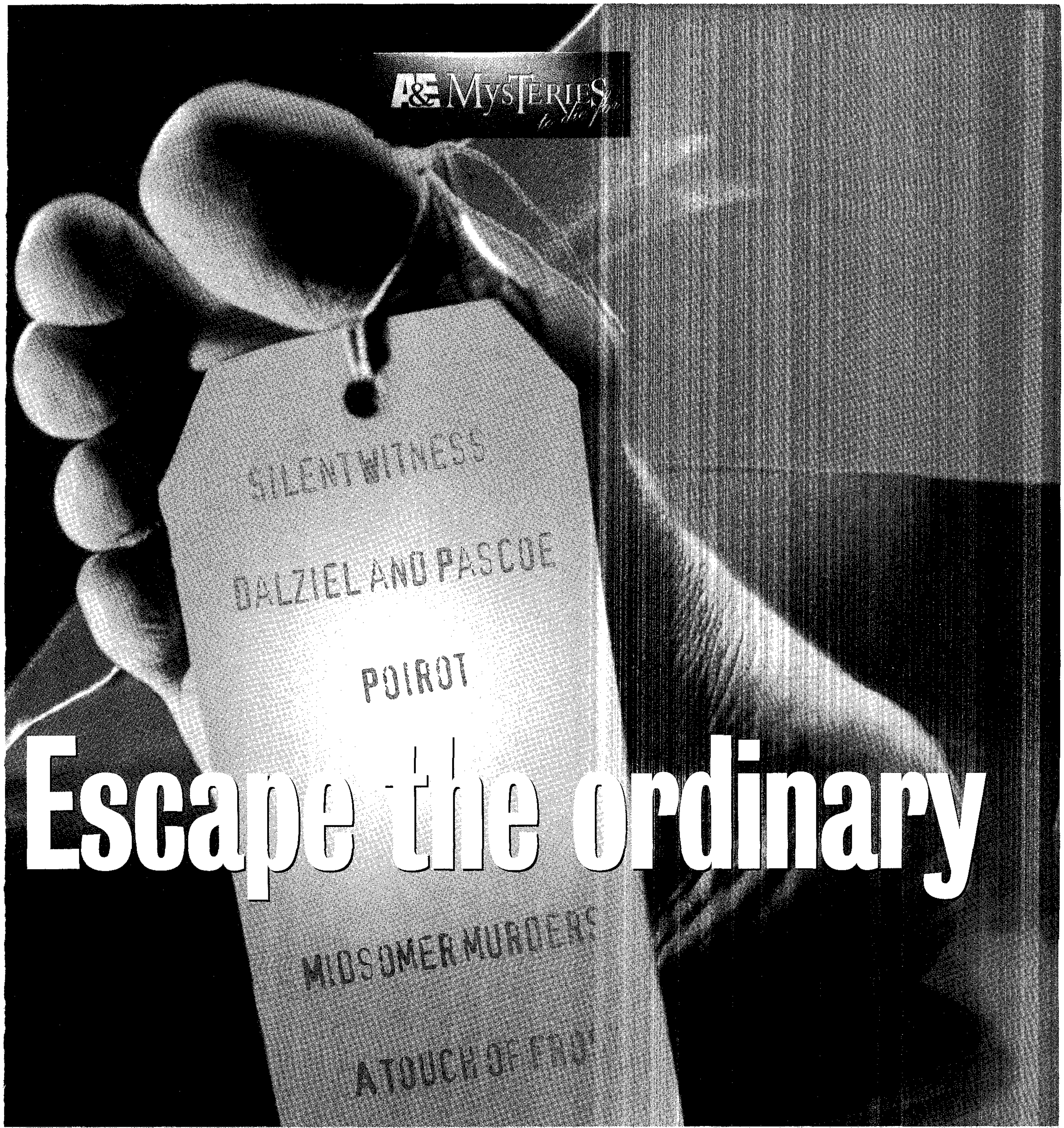

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bass dance music that this Bristol native turns out has nothing to do with laid-back island sounds. Size and his multiracial collective, Reprazent, make aggressive, hypnotically repetitive techno, most of it instrumental, that sounds best at very high volumes in extremely crowded clubs. A few months ago, "New Forms," his breakthrough CD, won Britain's Mercury Music Prize, the musical equivalent of the Booker Prize, unexpectedly beating out heavily favored albums by Radiohead and Prodigy. Over here, only hipsters and Anglophiles know who he is, which means he'll try extra hard to make you dance, and the crowds won't be too unbearable.

Wetlands, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—The **Nields** play harmony-laden folk pop on Nov. 13. Former Guns n' Roses guitarist **Gilby Clarke** puts something together on Nov. 16, and former Police guitarist **Andy Summers** performs his own arresting instrumental music on Nov. 17.

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—In "Pennies from Heaven" (through Nov. 15), the red-headed raconteuse **Mary Cleere Haran** recalls her childhood in a California Irish-Catholic family where thirties movie talk ("Scram, Countess") was the coin of the realm. Her song list of old favorites and forgotten gems is an homage to take-no-guff working-girl heroines like Jean Arthur and Ginger Rogers. Between her snappy lapsed-Catholic patter and her supple turns on old Eddie Cantor tunes and Cagney lullabies, you, too, feel like you're floating on a cloud of goofy optimism. **Andrea Marcovicci** takes over on Nov. 18 for a month and a half with the songs of Mabel Mercer. Dining.

Birdland, 315 W. 44th St. (581-3080)—How does **Toots Thielemans** (Nov. 12-16) maintain a competitive edge? No one plays jazz harmonica with as much passion, invention, and control. (Granted, the field is limited.) He's also a supple guitarist and a virtuoso whistler. (Again, few challengers.) Nov. 18: **Terell Stafford,** a sharp young neo-bop trumpeter who, as a graduate of Bobby Watson's populist bands, has learned how to keep one eye on the bandstand and the other on the audience. Dining.

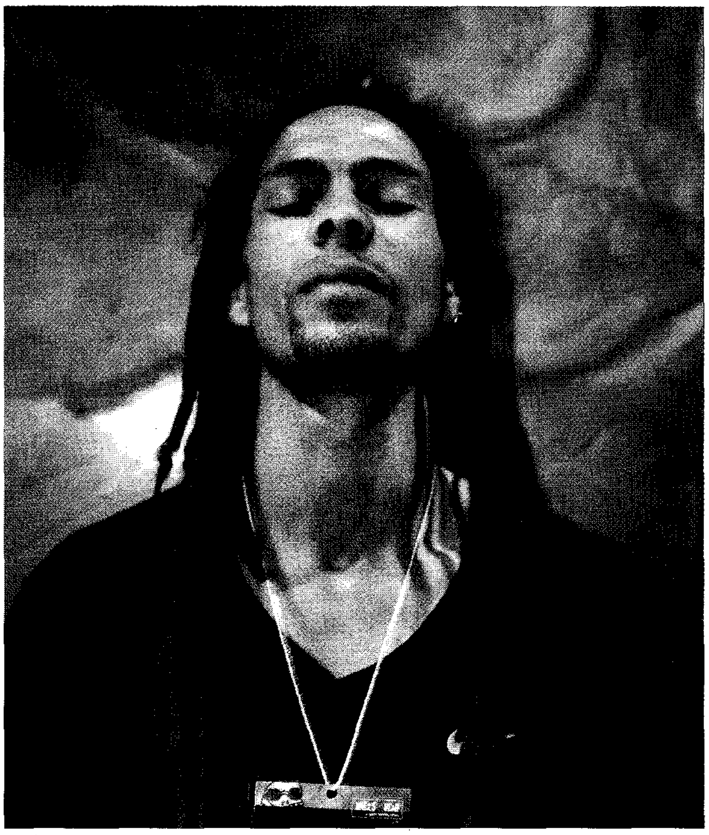
Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The sparkling **Bobby Short** presides in the Café Carlyle through Dec. 31. On Mondays, **Woody Allen** plays with the **Eddy Davis New Orleans Jazz Band.** . . . ¶ Across the hall, in Bemelmans Bar, **Barbara Carroll** has settled in for a stay that will take her through New Year's.

Iridium, 44 W. 63rd St. (582-2121)—The **Cyrus Chestnut** trio holds forth through Nov. 16. Pianist Chestnut is equal parts Art Tatum and Count Basie—a maniacal two-handed speed demon who can turn around and deliver the goods with a single note.

Jazz Standard, 116 E. 27th St. (576-2232)—A new jazz establishment features some new jazz hopefuls. **Jonny King** (in through Nov. 16) plays smart piano, drawing on a host of superior models as he firms up his own increasingly authoritative voice. His solid quintet includes the drum legend-in-the-making **Billy Drummond.**

Knickerbocker, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—Although lately they've had the support of bassist Michael Moore in a chamber jazz trio, pianist **Roger Kellaway** and guitarist **Gene Bertoncini** (Nov. 12-15) will undoubtedly get along fine here without him: both men are gifted players for whom lyricism comes as naturally as breathing.

Knitting Factory, 74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—Nov. 17: What, the **New Orleans Klezmer Allstars**? Well, the clarinet plays as large a role in the music of Eastern Europe as in the music of the Big Easy, so why not? (The bigger question: Is alligator meat kosher?) Nov. 18: The knotty and inventive compositions of pianist Herbie Nichols are slowly coming into style, but **Roswell Rudd,** the blustery pioneer of avant-jazz trombone, has a distinct advantage over other interpreters: he learned the tunes from Nichols himself. Eschewing piano altogether, his trio approaches the music from around the bend, demonstrating its versatile and adaptable nature.



Roni Size and Reprazent, at Twilo.

MAX VADUKUL

Smalls, 183 W. 10th St. (929-7565)—Guitarist **Anthony Wilson** brings in a small group featuring tenorist **Bennie Wallace** on Nov. 13.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—In his persistent attempts to get back to the basics of rhythm, **Leon Parker** (through Nov. 16) has recorded tunes using his own body as a percussion instrument. Thus, where playing in a duet setting with just one hornman might scare the pants off another drummer, for the ingenious Parker the situation is practically orchestral. It doesn't hurt that the other soloist is saxophonist **Steve Wilson,** with whom Parker has developed a special rapport. The two will be joined by pianist **Jacky Terrason** and bassist **Ugonna Okegwo** on Nov. 14-16 to conclude their stint. Dining.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Through Nov. 16: **Eric Reed,** another Wynton Marsalis-band alumnus made good, is a vigorous piano virtuoso who brings a gospel flair to his ever-maturing playing and writing. The **Vanguard Jazz Orchestra** holds sway on Mondays.

Visiones, 125 Macdougal St., at W. 3rd St. (673-5576)—Through Nov. 15: Tenor saxophonist **George Garzone,** a Boston staple, has his ardent supporters down here as well, including star saxophonist and sometime collaborator Joe Lovano.

ART

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (879-5500)—"The Private Collection of Edgar Degas." Through Jan. 11. . . . ¶ "The Drawings of Filippino Lippi and His Circle." An exquisite show of mostly small pen-and-ink, metal-point, and charcoal drawings, heightened by white gouache, on prepared papers of gorgeous hues: rust, salmon pink, blue-gray. The majority are by Filippino himself, the offspring of the prodigiously talented and lustful Carmelite monk Fra Filippo Lippi and a novice named Lucrezia Buti, whom, according to Vasari, he abducted. The father's sensuousness is discernible in the son's gestural sketches, nudes, pietàs, and allegories, and in the work of the son's contemporaries as well—there's a lovely rendering of arms and hands by Raffaelino del Garbo. And a case devoted to process offers unexpected enchantment: inside are a willow twig (for making charcoal), a selection of styluses and goose and chicken quills, a pounce bag (this one filled with charcoal dust), and a seashell filled with bread crumbs (for erasing mistakes). Through Jan. 11. . . . ¶ "Picasso: The Engraver." Through Dec. 21. . . . ¶ "Jackson Pollock: Early Sketchbooks and Drawings." Through Feb. 8. . . . ¶ "Richard Pousette-Dart (1916-92)." Thirty-odd paintings by the late Abstract Expressionist. Through Feb. 22. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—"Egon Schiele: The Leopold Collection, Vienna." More than a hundred and fifty oils, gouaches, watercolors, and sketches by the master draftsman, who, despite his death at twenty-eight from the Spanish flu, made defining contributions to Expressionist and erotic art. Through Jan. 4. . . . ¶ "On the Edge: Contemporary Art from the Werner and Elaine Dannheisser Collection." Through Jan. 20. . . . ¶ "New Photography 13" features work by Rineke Dijkstra, An-My Lê, Vik Muniz, and Kunié Suguara. Through Jan. 13. . . . ¶ "Achille Castiglioni: Design!" Cutlery, spotlights, floor lamps, tractor seats, and other graceful items from the witty Italian designer. Through Jan. 6. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, and Thursdays, 10:30 to 6; Fridays, 10:30 to 8:30.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (423-3500)—"Robert Rauschenberg: A Retrospective" offers more than four hundred pieces from nearly half a century of work. At both Guggenheim venues, through Jan. 7. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 10 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 8.)

Guggenheim Museum SoHo, 575 Broadway, at Prince St. (423-3500)—The museum's Rauschenberg retrospective continues here. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 6, and Saturday evenings until 8.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-3676)—The Richard Diebenkorn retrospective presents examples from every phase of the California master's career, including early sketches and figure studies, fifties-era abstractions, landscapes from the sixties, the "Ocean Park" series, and the late collages. Through Jan. 11. . . . ¶ "The Warhol Look/Glamour Style Fashion." An investigation into the wigged one's fascination with fashion, which intersperses examples of his art with personal memorabilia (a suit bought in Hong Kong in 1956), re-creations of fifties window displays, videos of Factory-era celebs prepping themselves for interviews, *Interview* covers, and so on. Through Jan. 18. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St. (769-5100)—"The Nature of Diamonds" looks at many facets of the adamantine stone, from its birth in volcanic fissures that later harden into diamond pipes (re-created here in a simulated mine tunnel) to its eventual rise to the heads of heads of state (e.g., on the crown of Peter the Great, displayed in the exhibition's walk-in diamond vault). Through April 26. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Brooklyn Museum of Art, Eastern Parkway (718-638-5000)—Monet did more travelling than the other Impressionists, and he went to some mighty pretty places: "Monet and the Mediterranean" unites paintings of the Riviera, painted in the eighteen-eighties, with those of Venice, from a trip in 1908. This exquisite exhibition therefore shows the artist both on the brink of discovering the "serial procedure" that would become his signature and after having mastered it. The gardens and seascapes of Antibes radiate a delightful freshness; the opulence of the paintings of the Doge's Palace and the Palazzo Dario aflame in dying light is dazzling. Through Jan. 4. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays, 11 to 9; and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

American Craft Museum, 40 W. 53rd St. (956-3535)—"Four Acts in Glass" fills all available galleries with installations by Dale Chihuly, William Morris, Pike Powers, and Bertil Vallien. Through Jan. 18. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 10 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 8.)

Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. (832-1155)—"Japanese Theatre in the World," an ambitious exhibition tracing the strands of classical drama—Bugaku, Noh, Kyogen, Bunraku, Kabuki—from the fourth century to the contemporary avant-garde. Through Feb. 1. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 5.)

Museum of the City of New York, Fifth Ave. at 104th St. (534-1672)—"Under the Big Top: Circuses in New York." Posters, costumes, photographs, circus toys, scale models, stuffed Bengal tigers, and historical notes, such as one about the contributions of the Frenchman Jules Leotard, inventor of the flying trapeze and of the form-fitting bodysuit that bears his name. Through Feb. 22. (Open Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

National Academy Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (369-4880)—For this installment of "The Artist's Eye," Academy member Will Barnet has selected more than forty paintings, sculptures, and works on paper that demonstrate various approaches to the portrait, including examples by fellow Academicians George Bellows, Thomas Hart Benton, Chuck Close, Jane Freilicher, Robert Rauschenberg, and Andrew Wyeth, among others. Nine portraits by Barnet himself accompany the exhibition. Through Dec. 28. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5, and Friday evenings until 8.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

Larry Rivers—Paintings and drawings that pay homage to Audubon, the plumage of American birds, and the snug outfits of women in the Hamptons. Through Nov. 29. (Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. 541-4900. Open Mondays.)

Robert Weinstock—Judeo-Christian images (the burning bush, the lion and the lamb) fashioned out of the colored foil from chocolate bars and framed in stuffed-animal fur. Like an illustrated children's edition of the Bible, they're simultaneously sweet and threatening. Through Dec. 6. (Giampietro, 25 E. 73rd St. 861-8571.)

"Forms and Rhythms"—Paintings, sculptures, and watercolors by Calder, Davis, and Léger. Through Dec. 23. (Mathes, 41 E. 57th St. 752-5135.)

Short List—**milton avery,** DC Moore, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 247-2111. Through Dec. 6. . . . **beattie & davidson,** Helman, 20 W. 57th St. 245-2888. Through Nov. 29. . . . **rudy burckhardt** and **joe brainard,** De Nagy, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 262-5050. Both shows through Nov. 29. . . . **alan davie,** Rickards, 1045 Madison Ave., at 79th St. 924-0858. Through Dec. 13. . . . **yves klein,** Danese, 41 E. 57th St. 223-2227. Through Nov. 29. . . . **franz kline,** Stone, 113 E. 90th St. 988-6870. Through Jan. 17. . . . **gabriel laderman,** Tatistcheff, 50 W. 57th St. 664-0907. Through Dec. 3. . . . **eugène leroy,** Werner, 21 E. 67th St. 988-1623. Open Mondays; through Nov. 29. . . . **sol le witt,** Ubu, 16 E. 78th St. 794-4444. Through Jan. 3 (see also Galleries—Chelsea). . . . **sheridan lord,** Peter Findlay, 41 E. 57th St. 644-4433. Through Nov. 25. . . . **ana mendieta,** Galerie Lelong, 20 W. 57th St. 315-0470. Through Dec. 20. . . . **piet mondrian and ad reinhardt,** Pace Wildenstein, 32 E. 57th St. 421-3292. Through Dec. 13. . . . **richard pousette-dart,** Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. 794-0550. Through Nov. 29. . . . **man ray,** Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. 752-0124. Through Dec. 20. . . . **john singer sargent,** Adelson, 25 E. 77th St. 439-6800. Through Dec. 13. . . . **pat steir,** Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. 980-5454. Through Nov. 29. . . . **cy twombly,** Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St. 744-2313. Through Dec. 20 (see also Galleries—Chelsea). . . . **boris zaborov,** O'Hara, 41 E. 57th St. 355-3330. Through Dec. 6.

GALLERIES—CHELSEA

Matthew Barney—Sculptures and photographs related to the artist's latest film, "Cremaster 5." As always, his installation is meticulously realized—he has transformed the Barbara Gladstone Gallery into what looks like yet another set for his cinematic fantasia. It's very impressive, but for viewers unfamiliar with his work it should function primarily as a teaser for the bizarre wonders of his film. Through Dec. 20. (515 W. 24th St. 206-9300.)

Carroll Dunham—New paintings in aggressively unpleasant colors. The artist's pictures continue to straddle the fence between abstraction and cartoonish representation—a familiar situation these days. That familiarity is in part an index of Dunham's influence among young painters; the recent two-gallery "Project Painting" show was in some respects a School of Dunham exhibition. Through Nov. 15. (Metro Pictures, 519 W. 24th St. 206-7100.)

Sol LeWitt—Maquettes, gouaches, and sculptures, including "Four-Sided Pyramid," an astonishing tower of approximately eleven hundred cement blocks. The artist demonstrates here, as he has in several New York exhibitions over the past few years, how the systematic array of basic forms can yield sublime results. Paula Cooper continues to serve as one of the preëminent venues for large-scale minimalist art. Through Nov. 22. (534 W. 21st St. 255-1105.)

Cy Twombly—Paintings and works on paper from the sixties and seventies. On a purely stylistic level, Twombly is perhaps the most influential painter of the post-Abstract Expressionist generation. This show includes two of the artist's "blackboard" paintings—chalklike drawing on gray-black grounds—and some ravishing drawings. Through Nov. 15. (Cheim & Read, 521 W. 23rd St. 242-7727.)

Terry Winters—A group of recent large-scale abstract paintings. Winters has found inspiration in unlikely places, e.g., European salon abstraction of the fifties; these pictures are brash, loud, and aggressive, and among the best of his career. Through Dec. 24. (Marks, 522 W. 22nd St. 243-0200. Opens at noon.)

Group Show—Steel sculptures by Mark di Suvero, Nancy Graves, Beverly Pepper, Judy Pfaff, George Rickey, Jeffrey Rubinoff, and Ann Sperry. Through Dec. 13. (Two Sculptors, 124 W. 18th St. 645-3584.)

Short List—**nina bovasso,** Clementine, 526 W. 26th St. 243-5937. Through Nov. 29. . . . **mary carlson,** Maynes, 529 W. 20th St. 741-3318. Through Dec. 13. . . . **rodney graham,** 303 Gallery, 525 W. 22nd St. 255-1121. Through Dec. 20. . . . **oliver herring,** Protetch, 511 W. 22nd St. 633-6999. Through Dec. 6. . . . **frank holliday,** Debs, 529 W. 20th St. 647-7080. Through Dec. 6. . . . **jacqueline humphries,** Greene Naftali, 526 W. 26th St. 463-7770. Through Nov. 29.

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

John Currin—Wicked, subversive paintings, several of them of blond, pale, miniskirted women with breasts the size of basketballs (Daisy Mae times ten), rendered in a flat retro-seventies palette. Through Nov. 22. (Rosen, 130 Prince St. 941-0203.)

ONLY CONNECT

The Useless Pages (http://www.go2net.com/internet/useless/index.html)—Frankly, a lot of people who claim that the Web is of no use don't know the half of it. Steve (Mr. Useless) Berlin knows a lot, which is why he feels qualified to host the Useless Pages, a site that has been around (in one form or another) since 1994, categorizing the fixations of Web-site users and builders while subtly mocking them.

Take the Auto Refresh feature—please. It was only a year or so ago that thousands flocked to the Web just to see images of anything—traffic, fish, numbers—change (or refresh) about every ten seconds; Berlin offers twenty-nine of the most insipid ways the feature has been put to use. Wait, you protest, I have a life. Well, you're lucky. Those less fortunate spend their days creating pages like Elvis in Latin ("Tutti Frutti" is translated as "Totus Potus") and the ultimate dare-to-be-paranoid page, Elvis Shot J.F.K. Still too useful for you? Visit the Fortune Telling page and link up with Kurt Cobain's Magic Talking 8-Ball, where you can hear the dead rocker address questions from beyond the grave with such non-answers as "I sing and play the guitar, and I'm a walking, talking bacterial infection."

The Useless Pages have been demonized by no less ardent a Net cheerleader than *Wired,* which called them a "waste of electrons"—exactly the point!—but some of the wrath Berlin suffers must be in response to his emperor's-new-clothes attitude toward Web sites, the Net, and computers in general. The targets are often obvious—"Star Trek" sites, for instance (one of the links is to the Campaign to Out Elim Garak page, Garak being a "Deep Space Nine" character). The Uselessness of Star Wars, a subcategory of the movie page, includes a page titled Boba Fett Sucks. "He's nothing more than a glorified U.P.S. deliveryman!," the site's author claims of this minor character in the trilogy, to which Berlin responds, "How often do you wake up feeling hostile over a fictitious character?"

Keith Mayerson—Paintings and drawings of a diverse band of role models and love objects, including Frankenstein, Keanu Reeves, and Alain Delon. Through Nov. 29. (Gorney, 100 Greene St. 966-4480.)

Carl Palazzolo—A series of smoky paintings in the artist's "personal history of Italian film." Through Dec. 20. (Lennon, Weinberg, 560 Broadway. 941-0012.)

Susan Rothenberg—New paintings by one of the art stars of the eighties. Rothenberg is finally moving beyond her signature image of the horse: in this series favoring figural groups, she works up dense, sensuous crusts of weathered paint but then undercuts their obvious appeal with an unsettling palette of dirty pinks, yellows, and whites. These are among the most difficult paintings of her career. Through Dec. 13. (Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St. 431-3685.)

Julian Schnabel—"Portrait Paintings," a new series of large-scale works by an enfant terrible of New Expressionism, which balance his strengths (exuberant and virtuoso handling of paint) against his weaknesses (slapdash carelessness). Schnabel is extremely prolific; on the evidence of this show, he might do himself a favor by working a bit more deliberately, but perhaps that would seem less . . . heroic. Through Dec. 13. (Pace Wildenstein, 142 Greene St. 431-9224.)

Haim Steinbach—An exhibition of photographs, shelf works, and recent installations, all of which attest to the artist's keen feeling for the imaginative power of objects. An industrial shelving structure, "Backyard Story," features logs, bright-orange plastic jack-o'-lanterns, Weber grills, and old clothes hanging from a line. Through Dec. 6. (Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway. 966-6160.)

"Coming Home Again"—Works by recent alumni of the School of Visual Arts, including such stars as Alexis Rockman, Elizabeth Peyton, and Gary Simmons. Through Nov. 29. (Visual Arts Gallery, 137 Wooster St. 598-0221.)

Short List—**DONALD BAECHLER,** Shafrazi, 119 Wooster St. 274-9300. Through Dec. 6. . . . **BRENDA GOODMAN,** Steele, 420 West Broadway. 941-8388. Through Nov. 29. . . . **SIOBHÁN HAPASKA,** Bonakdar, 130 Prince St. 925-8035. Through Nov. 26. . . . **BARBARA KRUGER,** Deitch Projects Annex, 18 Wooster St. 343-7300. Through Dec. 20. . . . **HUNG LIU,** Steinbaum Krauss, 132 Greene St. 431-4224. Through Nov. 18. . . . **ANTONIO MURADO,** Schoormans, 12 E. 2nd St. 477-6953. Through Nov. 29. . . . **RAYMOND PETTIBON,** Zwirner, 43 Greene St. 966-9074. Through Nov. 29. . . . **FURA S.,** 123 Watts Gallery, 123 Watts St. 219-1482. Through Dec. 7. . . . **DAVID SANDLIN,** Gracie Mansion Gallery, 54 St. Marks Pl. 505-7055. Through Nov. 22. . . . **RICHARD SERRA,** Gagosian, 136 Wooster St. 228-2828. Through Dec. 20. . . . **SHAZIA SIKANDER,** Deitch Projects, 76 Grand St. 343-7300. Through Nov. 29.

AUCTIONS AND ANTIQUES

Sotheby's—Nov. 12: Twentieth-century paintings and sculptures from the collection of the late Evelyn Sharp, including works by Picasso, Matisse, Modigliani, and Vlaminck. . . . ¶ Nov. 13: Impressionist and modern art, including ten post-Impressionist paintings by Cézanne (which are expected together to fetch upwards of twenty-three million dollars). . . . ¶ Nov. 18: Tribal Art. (York Ave. at 72nd St. 606-7000.)

Christie's—Nov. 12: Impressionist and modern paintings, drawings, and sculptures, including twenty-eight lots of sculptures and decorative pieces by Diego Giacometti, as well as two by his more famous brother, Alberto. . . . ¶ Nov. 18: Contemporary art, by de Kooning, Rothko, and many others. (Park Ave. at 59th St. 546-1000.)

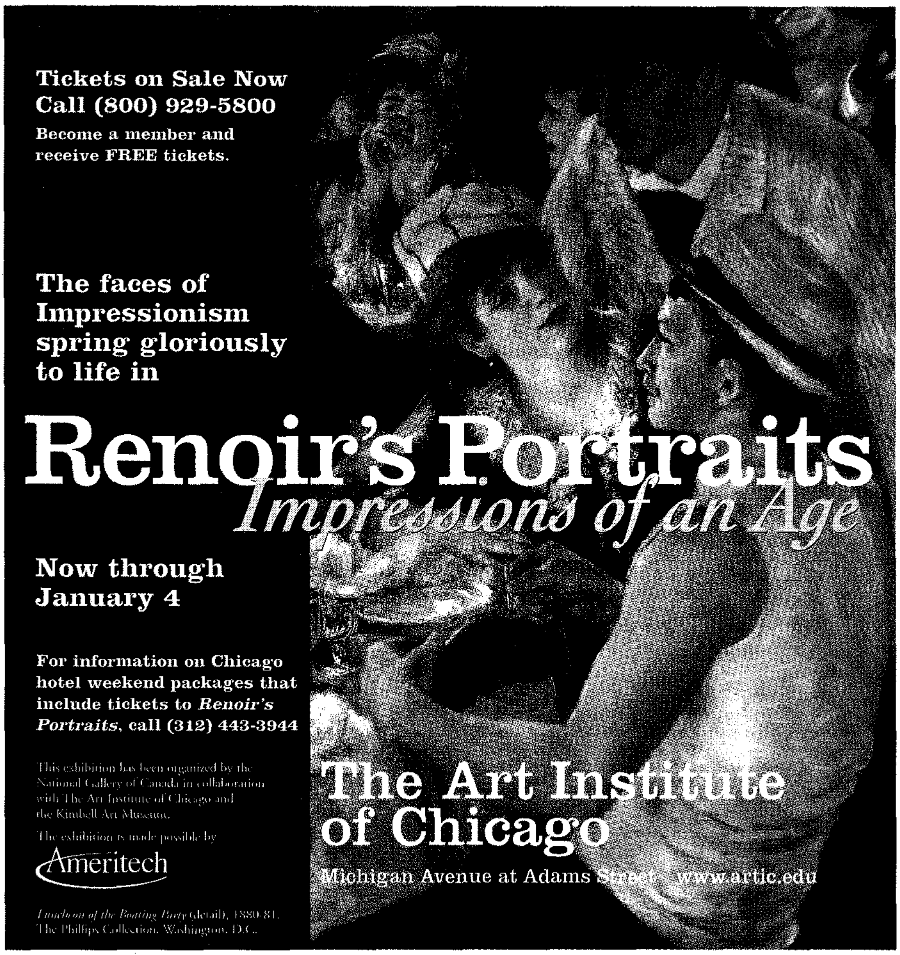
Phillips—An auction of fine and rare wines. (406 E. 79th St. 570-4830. Nov. 15.)

Modernism/Photography—This year, Sanford Smith's annual show of modernist decorative art expands to give equal billing to photography. (7th Regiment Armory, Park Ave. at 66th St. Nov. 13-16. For information, call 777-5218.)

Triple Pier Show—A sprawling event for treasure seekers of all stripes. (Piers 88, 90, and 92, Twelfth Ave. from 48th St. to 52nd St. Nov. 15-16 and Nov. 22-23. For information, call 255-0020.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Jules Backus (1944-96)—"Ambush in the Streets." Often *pochoirs,* or stencils, are used on the otherwise ordinary stone, brick, and plaster walls of Paris buildings to create whimsical or political street art. Backus's views of them are as quiet and winsome as a stroll down a Parisian *petite rue.* Through Dec. 6. (Cooper Union's Foundation Building, Third Ave. at 7th St. 353-4214. Open Mondays through Fridays, noon to 7, Saturdays, noon to 5.)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Luncheon of the Boating Party (detail), 1880-81.
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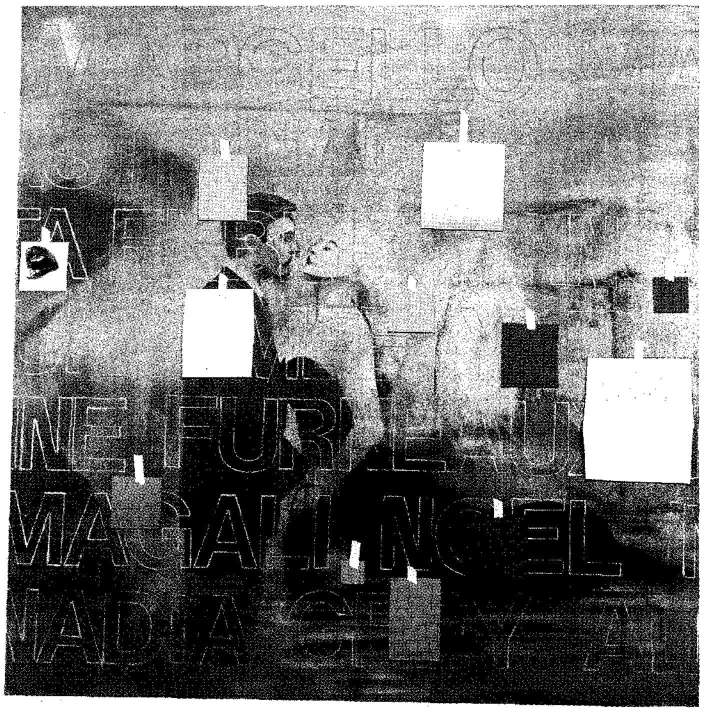
Ralston Crawford (1906-78) / **Ray K. Metzker**—The joy this painter and photographer took from roaming the streets of American towns, especially New Orleans, is abundantly evident in these pictures of grain elevators, striped barbershop façades, and jazz musicians. / Recent, darkly lit images of the Utah badlands. Very handsome. Both shows through Nov. 29. (Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. 226-1220.)

James Fee—Most of the artist's stylish black-and-white pictures, spattered and brushed with chemical stains, depict an industrial America on the verge of ruin: abandoned factories, beached ships, and so on. The approach works to spectacular effect in a very large, nearly apocalyptic picture of a blimp above New York City (with the deadpan title "Westside Highway"). But the most affecting works here are the untreated ones: an abandoned drive-in movie screen in Iowa waits in vain behind encroaching trees for its next feature. Through Nov. 15. (Richardson, 560 Broadway. 343-1255.)



"A Personal History of Italian Film #9," by Carl Palazzolo (Lennon, Weinberg).

Richard Misrach—New additions to two of the photographer's "Desert Cantos." The pure color images of skies at dawn and dusk are utterly beautiful, while the extended exposures of starry skies, all circles and angles and bright flares, are less sublime but more intriguing—they're like road maps of the heavens. Through Nov. 15. (Marcus, 578 Broadway. 226-3200.)

Neil Winokur—Funny still-lifes of quotidian things—the artist's lunch, his tools, his toiletries, his cats—arranged against very bright backdrops of pink, orange, and blue. Through Nov. 15. (Borden, 560 Broadway. 431-0166.)

Short List—**TOM BARIL**, Benrubi, 52 E. 76th St. 517-3766. Through Dec. 6. . . . **HOWARD BINGHAM**, McEnroe, 41 Greene St. 219-0395. Through Dec. 6. . . . **ERWIN BLUMENFELD** and **ANDRÉ KERTÉSZ**, Danziger, 130 Prince St. 226-0056. Both shows through Dec. 6. . . . **MARIO CRAVO NETO**, Witkin, 415 West Broadway. 925-5510. Through Dec. 6. . . . **JIMMY DE SANA**, Hearn, 530 W. 22nd St. 727-7366. Through Nov. 29. . . . **FRANTIŠEK DRTIKOL** and **RICHARD GERE**, Greenberg, 120 Wooster St. 334-0010. Both shows through Dec. 6. . . . **IMRE KINSZKI**, Gallery 292, at 120 Wooster St. 431-0292. Through Dec. 6. . . . **ANTONIN KRATOCHVIL**, SABA, 116 E. 16th St. 477-7722. Open Mondays, closed Saturdays; through Dec. 1. . . . **EDOARDO MANTELLI**, Angel Orensanz Foundation Center for the Arts, 172 Norfolk St., at E. Houston St. 431-8102. Open daily; through Nov. 22. . . . **LÁSZLÓ MOHOLY-NAGY** and **MICHAL ROVNER**, Pace Wildenstein MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. 759-7999. Both shows through Nov. 29. . . . **JOHN O'REILLY**, Saul, 560 Broadway. 431-0747. Through Nov. 15. . . . **SUSAN RANKAITIS**, Mann, 42 E. 76th St. 570-1223. Through Dec. 13. . . . **MIGUEL RIO BRANCO**, D'Amelio Terras, 525 W. 22nd St. 352-9460. Through Dec. 6. . . . **JOHN STEWART** and **ALEXANDER VETHERS**, Staley-Wise, 560 Broadway. 966-6223. Through Nov. 29. . . . **LARRY TOWELL**, Leica, 670 Broadway. 777-3051. Opens Saturdays at noon; through Dec. 13.

(See the museum listings for a photography exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC

(The box-office number for Alice Tully Hall is 875-5050; for Carnegie Hall and Weill Recital Hall, 247-7800; and for Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St., 854-7799.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—**LA CENERENTOLA**, with Cecilia Bartoli, Ramón Vargas, Alessandro Corbelli, Simone Alaimo, and Michele Pertusi; conducted by James Levine. (Nov. 12 at 7:30.) . . . With Roberto de Candia instead of Mr. Corbelli. (Nov. 15 at 8:30.) . . . **TANNHÄUSER**, with Sharon Sweet, Jeannine Altmeyer, Dawn Upshaw, Wolfgang Schmidt, Bryn Terfel, and Jan-Hendrik Rootering; Mr. Levine. (Nov. 13 at 7:30.) . . . With Ms. Sweet, Marilyn Schmiege, Ms. Upshaw, Jon Fredric West, Mr. Terfel, and Mr. Rootering; Mr. Levine. (Nov. 18 at 7:30.) . . . **DON GIOVANNI**, with Deborah Riedel, Amanda Roocroft, Maria Bayo, Stanford Olsen, Dwayne Croft, and Paul Plishka; Daniel Beckwith. (Nov. 14 at 8.) . . . With Ildebrando d'Arcangelo instead of Mr. Plishka. (Nov. 17 at 8.) . . . **TURANDOT**, with Eva Marton, Ruth Ann Swenson, Kristján Jóhannsson, and Sergei Koptchak; Nello Santi. (Nov. 15 at 1:30.) (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

New York City Opera—Handel's **XERXES**, in English. (Nov. 13 at 7:30 and Nov. 16 at 1:30.) . . . **DON PASQUALE**. (Nov. 14 at 8.) . . .

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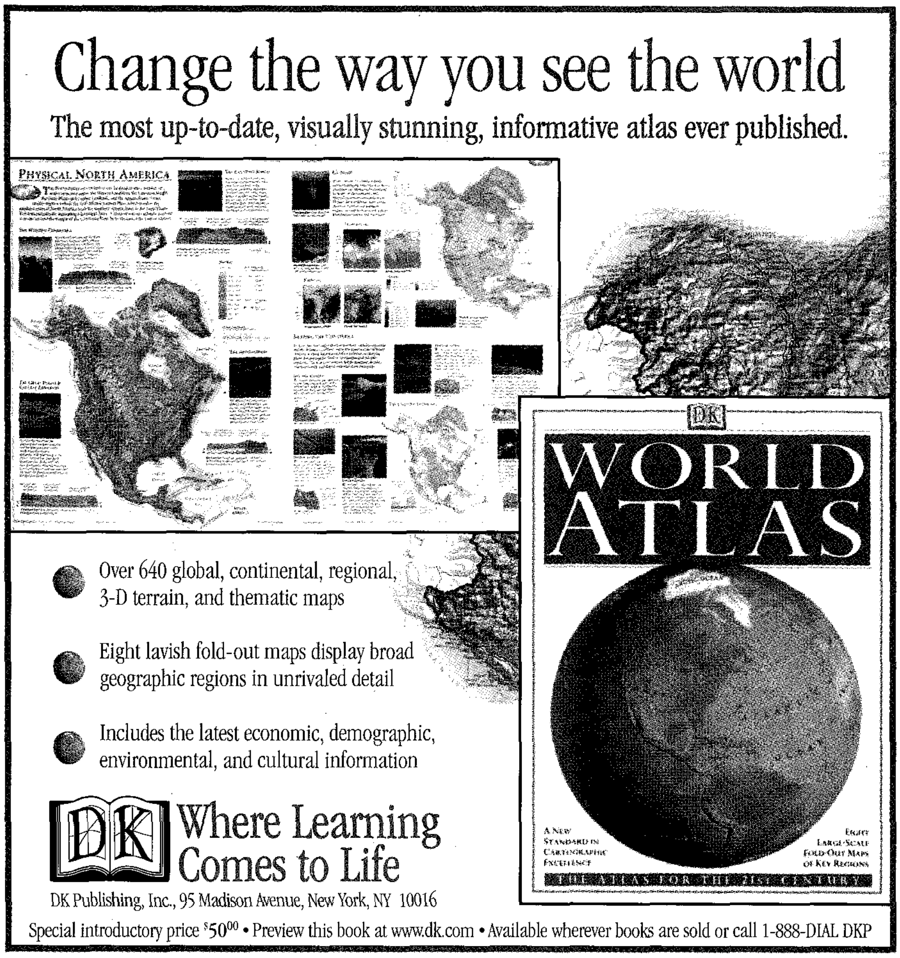

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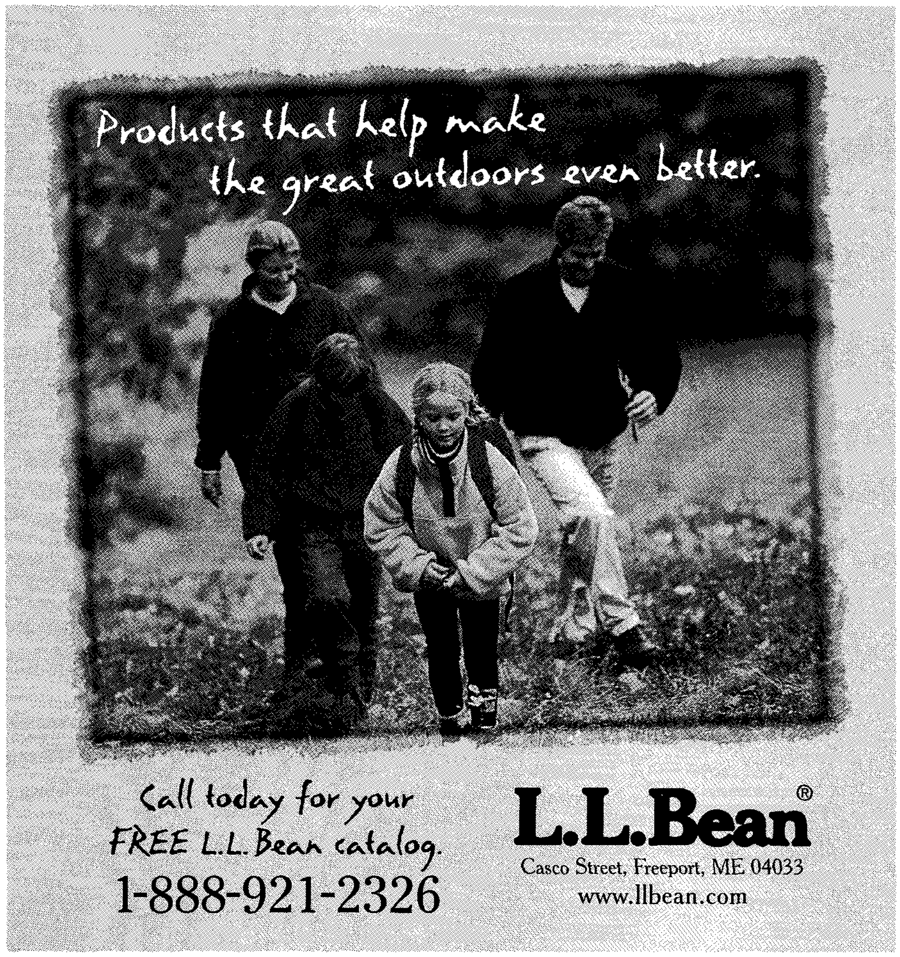

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MARCO POLO, by Tan Dun. (Nov. 15 at 1:30.) . . . **LA BOHÈME.** (Nov. 15 at 8 and Nov. 18 at 7:30.) (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC—At Avery Fisher Hall, Myung-Whun Chung conducting. Nov. 12 at 6:45: A Rush Hour Concert comprising a single work: Berlioz's "Symphonie Fantastique." . . . ¶ Nov. 13 and Nov. 15 at 8, Nov. 14 at 2, and Nov. 18 at 7:30: Messiaen's "L'Ascension" and Berlioz's "Symphonie Fantastique." (875-5030.)

NETHERLANDS CHAMBER CHOIR—Uwe Gronostay directs works by Bach, Rheinberger (his "Cantus Missae," for double chorus), Mendelssohn, Pizzetti, Carter ("To Music"), and Robert Heppener. (St. Bartholomew's Church, Park Ave. at 50th St. 378-0248. Nov. 12 at 7:30.)

RIVERSIDE SYMPHONY—George Rothman leads Prokofiev's Piano Concerto No. 1 (with Alex Slobodyanik), Beethoven's Symphony No. 2, and the première of Poul Ruders's Symphony No. 2. (Alice Tully Hall. Nov. 13 at 8.)

NATIONAL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA—The orchestra from Washington, D.C., comes to town for three concerts at Carnegie Hall, all focussing on music about childhood, and all conducted by the ensemble's new music director, Leonard Slatkin. Nov. 14 at 8: Debussy's "Children's Corner Suite" (performed in its original version by pianist Jeffrey Siegel, as well as in an orchestral transcription by André Caplet), Dohnányi's "Variations on a Nursery Song" (with Mr. Siegel), and Corigliano's "The Pied Piper Fantasy" (featuring flutist James Galway, who is about as close to a real-life Pied Piper as can be found). . . . ¶ Nov. 15 at 8: John Alden Carpenter's "Adventures in a Perambulator" and Gabriel Pierné's oratorio "La Croisade des Enfants," both of which were once repertoire items but are rarities nowadays; the latter includes the input of sopranos Heidi Grant Murphy and Linda Hohenfeld, mezzo-soprano Susanna Poretsky, tenor John Aler, baritone William Sharp, the Oratorio Society of Washington, and a couple of children's choirs. . . . **NOTE:** On Nov. 15 at 2, the orchestra also presents a family concert, with music by Carpenter, Debussy, Dohnányi, and Mozart.

PHILHARMONIA VIRTUOSI—Performing works by Virgil Thomson, Bach, and Mendelssohn, with mezzo-soprano Barbara Conrad and the Convent Avenue Baptist Church Sanctuary Choir. Richard Kapp conducts. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Nov. 15 at 7.)

NEW YORK MANDOLIN ORCHESTRA—For people who want to hear thirty mandolins play the finale of Haydn's Symphony No. 88 (not to mention works by Johann Strauss and Manfredini). (St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 346 W. 20th St. Nov. 16 at 4. Tickets at the door.)

NEW YORK CHAMBER SYMPHONY—Gerard Schwarz conducts premières of works by Heskel Brisman, John Carbon, Mitch Hampton, Peter Homans, William Thomas McKinley, Marie Barker Nelson, and Frank Graham Stewart. (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. Nov. 17 at 8.)

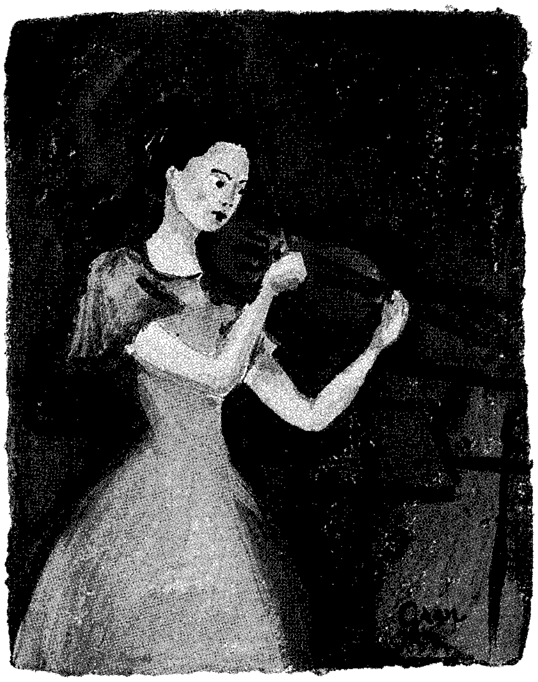
ORCHESTRA OF ST. LUKE'S—In a tribute marking the sesquicentennial of Mendelssohn's death, Julius Rudel conducts excerpts from the composer's Incidental Music to "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and from his oratorio "Elijah" (with the Temple Emanu-El Choir). (Temple Emanu-El, Fifth Ave. at 65th St. Nov. 18 at 6:30. No tickets necessary.)

NEW YORK PRO ARTE CHAMBER ORCHESTRA—Organ concertos are often difficult enough to coördinate in performance, since the soloist tends to be separated from the orchestra; yet some composers have further complicated the situation by adding a second solo instrument to the performing roster. The most famous of these double concertos is Poulenc's Concerto for Organ, Timpani, and Strings, which will be played here by organist Stephen Hamilton and timpanist Trey Files. While they're about it, the orchestra will present a second organ-plus piece, Michael Haydn's Concerto for Viola, Organ, and Strings, with violist Lucy Corwin joining Mr. Hamilton. Works by Mozart and Roussel complete the program. Raffael Adler conducts. (Church of the Holy Trinity, 316 E. 88th St. 289-4100. Nov. 18 at 8.)

RECITALS

"Stringfest"—Herbert R. Axelrod is legendary in the worlds of both ichthyology and string playing. He parlayed his expertise on tropical fish into a small publishing empire focussing on books and magazines for people with pets. He's also an avid amateur violinist whose success in the publishing business has enabled him to acquire what many consider the most impressive private collection of fine stringed instruments anywhere. He's not stingy about his collection: some of his most spectacular holdings—a full matched quartet (two violins, viola, and cello) by the seventeenth-century Bavarian luthier Jacobus Stainer, and another quartet of inlaid instruments by Stradivari—are on permanent display at the Smithsonian Institution, where the only string attached (you should excuse the expression) is that they be played at least once a month. Axelrod celebrates his seventieth birthday at Carnegie Hall, where a bevy of string players will serenade him (and the rest of the audience) with works by Haydn, Mozart, Paganini, and others. On the roster are violinists Pamela Frank, Leila Josefowicz, Shlomo Mintz, Elmar Oliveira, and Vladimir Spivakov; the Moscow Virtuosi; and the American String Quartet (which here plays on Axelrod's Stradivari instruments, removed from the Smithsonian for the occasion). (Nov. 12 at 7:30. A benefit concert.)

Kuijken Trio—Three eminent early-music specialists—brothers Barthold and Wieland Kuijken (flutist and violist da gamba, respectively) and harpsichordist Robert Kohnen—perform French Baroque chamber works by Couperin, Leclair, Marais, and Rameau. (Weill Recital Hall. Nov. 12 at 8.)



Sarah Chang, in recital at Carnegie Hall.

ELIZA GRAN

Tokyo String Quartet—The foursome plays quartets by Beethoven (in F Minor, Op. 95) and Shostakovich (his First); violist Toby Hoffman and cellist Gary Hoffman assist in Tchaikovsky's "Souvenir de Florence." (Alice Tully Hall. Nov. 12 at 8.)

Samuel Bartos—Pianist, performing Bach's "Goldberg" Variations. (Miller Theatre. Nov. 12 at 8.)

Artek Ensemble—Soprano Jessica Tranzillo, mezzo-soprano Barbara Hollinshead, and the period-instrument players perform Italian Baroque arias and duets, by Monteverdi, Carissimi, and others. (Lady Chapel, St. Patrick's Cathedral, Fifth Ave. at 50th St. 753-2261, ext. 274. Nov. 13 at 7:30.)

Bargemusic—Pianist Phillip Bush performs Brahms's Four Ballades (Op. 10); violinist Carmit Zori and cellist Peter Wyrick join him for trios by Haydn (in E Minor) and Beethoven (in E-Flat Major, Op. 70, No. 2). (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-4061. Nov. 13 at 7:30 and Nov. 16 at 4.)

Sonic Boom Festival—The annual showcase of twentieth-century music continues at Miller Theatre. Nov. 13 at 8: The Da Capo Chamber Players perform Rzewski's "De Profundis" (featuring pianist Lisa Moore, who will also have to whistle, sing, and pound), an excerpt from Stockhausen's opera "Samstag" (with flutist Patricia Spencer), and Maxwell Davies's "Vesalii Icones" (with nudity in the last; who said classical concerts are tame?). . . . ¶ Nov. 15 at 8: The complete solo and chamber music of the late Conlon Nancarrow, performed by the members of Continuum. . . . ¶ Nov. 16 at 4: Speculum Musicae offers Schoenberg's String Trio, as well as works by Druckman, Davidovsky, Wayne Peterson (a première), and Ross Bauer. . . . ¶ Nov. 18 at 8: Ensemble 21 performs electronic and electro-acoustic works by Jonathan Harvey (his "Tombeau de Messiaen"), Roger Reynolds, Jean-Claude Risset, James Primosch, Paul Lansky, and Eric Chasalow.

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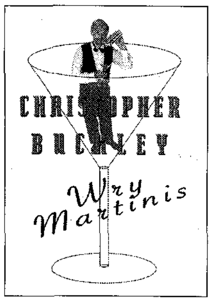

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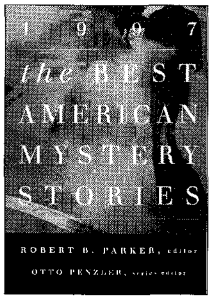
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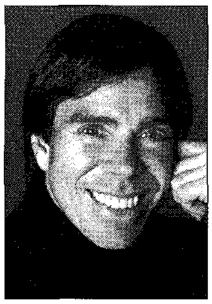

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Ruth Laredo—The pianist performs and discusses music by Ravel. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Nov. 14 at 7.)

Nathalie Stutzmann—The contralto, with pianist Inger Södergren, presents songs by Schubert, Brahms, Chausson, and Poulenc. (Weill Recital Hall. Nov. 14 at 8.)

Janos Starker—The distinguished cellist has been pondering Bach's Unaccompanied Cello Suites for most of his seventy-three years, and five years ago set about recording them for the fifth time. The very satisfying result of what he has called this "never-ending quest for beauty, as well as, in some sense, the truth" was finally released in the United States last spring by BMG Classics/RCA Victor Red Seal. In this recital, he offers the first three of these transcendent works. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100. Nov. 15 at 8.)

Catherine Malfitano—The soprano performs songs by Rodrigo, Barber, and Bolcom, in addition to a heaping handful of selections from Weill's stage works. Pianist Robert Tweten assists. (Alice Tully Hall. Nov. 16 at 2.)

Sarah Chang—In her Carnegie Hall début recital, the violinist, already a seasoned performer though she's only sixteen, plays sonatas by Mozart (in C Major, K. 296), Strauss, and Prokofiev (his Second), among other works. Pianist Charles Abramovic assists. (Nov. 16 at 2.)

Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center—Members of the society perform two large-scale chamber works: Beethoven's Septet (Op. 20) and Schubert's Octet. (Alice Tully Hall. Nov. 16 at 5 and Nov. 18 at 7:30.)

Eugenia Zukerman and Anthony Newman—The flutist and the keyboard player explore ways that Mendelssohn and Beethoven responded to the writings of Goethe. (Celeste Bartos Forum, New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. 930-0571. Nov. 18 at 6.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

NC-17—In an evening of music and performance honoring the First Amendment, Robin Williams offers monologues by Lenny Bruce, Phoebe Snow performs songs once banned by the Federal Communications Commission, Natalie Portman reads from Anne Frank's diary, and a couple of dozen other actors and artists, including Paul Newman, Christopher Reeve, and Andres Serrano, present works associated with free speech. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. Nov. 17 at 8. 840-2824.)

Bedtime Stories—Curious George, The Cat in the Hat, and other costumed characters host the Children's Book Fair, Nov. 14-16, from 11 to 6. Highlights include thousands of volumes for sale and the presence of such authors as Ed Emberley ("Glad Monster Sad Monster"), on Nov. 14 at 11:45; William Wegman (and his weimaraners), on Nov. 15 at 11; and Elizabeth Koda-Callen ("Secret Diary"), on Nov. 16 at 1:45. (Winter Garden, World Financial Center, Battery Park City. For more information, call 945-2600.)

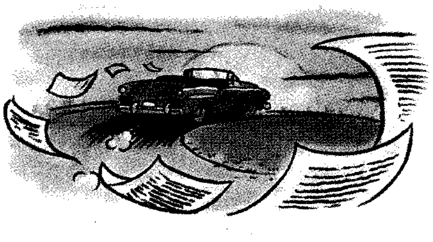
Readings—Nov. 12 at 8: By Grace Schulman and Rachel Hadas, from their poetry. (Stella Adler Conservatory, 419 Lafayette St. 260-0525.) . . . ¶ Nov. 13 at 7:30: By the "Best American Poetry" series editor, David Lehman, and this year's guest editor, James Tate, from their own poetry and from the collection's 1997 edition. (Hemmerdinger Hall, New York University, 100 Washington Sq. E. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Nov. 17 at 8: By Don DeLillo, Cynthia Ozick, William Meredith, Jamaica Kincaid, and other 1997 National Book Award finalists, from their prose and poetry. (National Arts Club, 15 Gramercy Park S. For reservations, which are required, call 475-3424.)

Talk—Nov. 12 at 7: Directors Peter Bogdanovich and Tom Noonan and Jungian analysts Dr. John Beebe, Linda Leonard, and Don Williams explore the connections between dreams and the art of filmmaking. (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. 307-7171.)

BOOK CURRENTS

Narrative Drive

"THE cruellest thing you can do to Kerouac is reread him at thirty-eight," says a character in Hanif Kureishi's "The Buddha of Suburbia." So perhaps the fortieth anniversary of **On the Road** (a commemorative edition has recently been published by Viking) is a good landmark at which to pause and reflect, rather than genuflect.



ROSS MACDONALD

Scottish screenwriter John Hodge, whose lovers-on-the-lam screenplay for "A Life Less Ordinary" is a sort of road odyssey itself, read "On the Road" as a teenager and admits that he struggled through it in a way that he probably wouldn't today. "I think it's more interesting for what it tells us about the time it was written in than as a piece of literature itself," he says. "Kerouac does capture very well the idea of random movement around a vast nation. And he established new parameters in which other writers could work. I'm sure that all those explosions of form that occurred in his writing made it easier for other novelists to write in their own style, their own vernacular, without being burdened by the need to stick to traditional forms."

"On the Road" also paved the way for self-important books about personal enlightenment, among them **Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance** (Bantam)—whose second half, Hodge notes, is filled with "chunks of turgid psychobabble." Hodge prefers other books about journeys, such as Faulkner's **As I Lay Dying** (Random House), which he admires for its dialogue and characterization, and for "the relentless series of incidents that occur, all marked by the gradual rotting away of a corpse." And his movie—in which unconnected incidents follow one after another, its characters powerless to influence events—reflects some elements of Voltaire's **Candide** (Norton).

But the on-the-road chronicle that's most fun to read just may be the one none of us will admit to liking. "I was talking to ['A Life Less Ordinary'''s producer] Andrew Macdonald about this, and his first response was, 'Oh, yeah, **The Lord of the Rings**, that's the best road novel.'" (Tolkien's trilogy is published by Houghton Mifflin.) "It's not very fashionable in literary circles to admire 'The Lord of the Rings,'" says Hodge, "but it's pretty compulsive—once you get through the first hundred pages, you can't stop."

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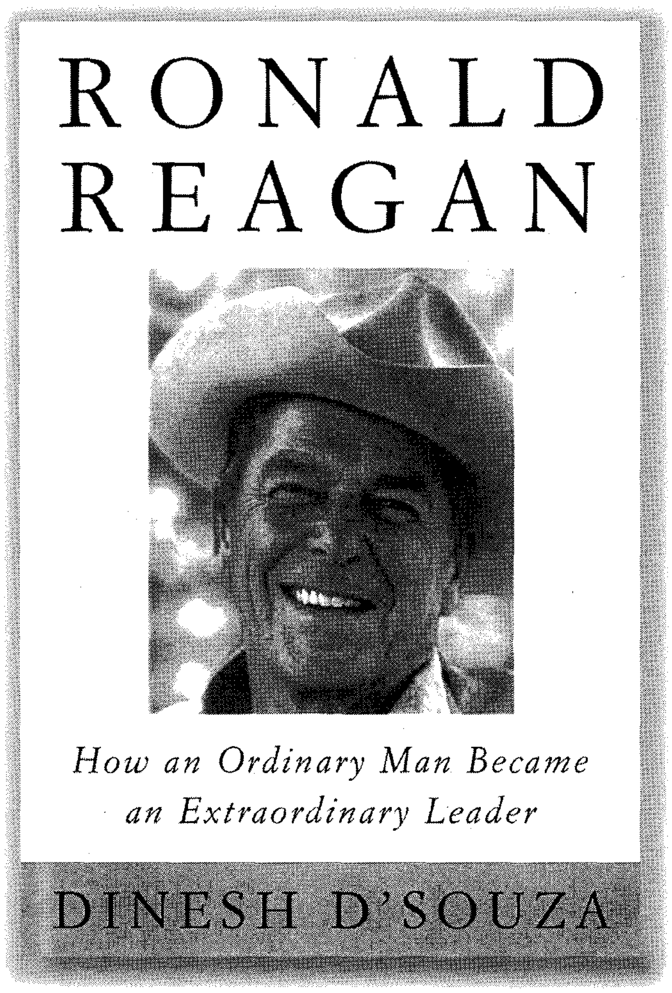
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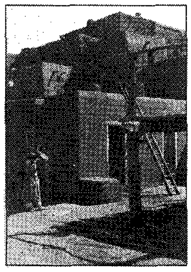

Ansel Adams, *Taos Pueblo*, San Francisco, 1930.

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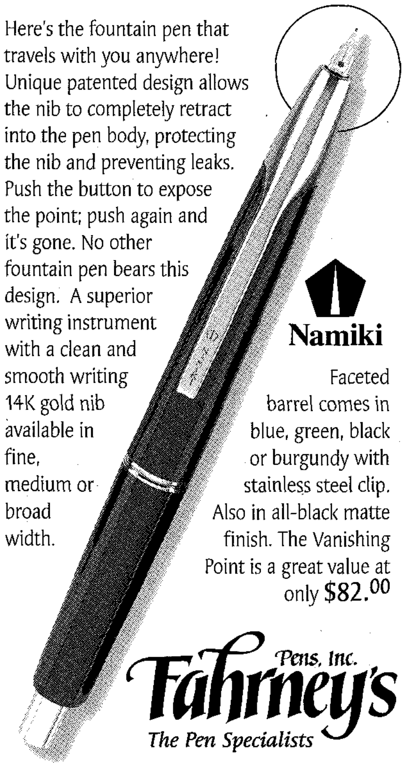

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THE MOVIES

OPENING THIS WEEK

Anastasia—An animated musical directed by Don Bluth and Gary Goldman, about the discovery of the long-lost Russian princess. With the voices of Meg Ryan, John Cusack, Angela Lansbury, Christopher Lloyd, and Hank Azaria. Opening Nov. 14. (Ziegfeld.)

Bugis Street—A Singapore brothel in the late sixties specializing in transvestites and transsexuals is the setting for this drama directed by Yonfan. Opening Nov. 14. (Village East Cinemas.)

Habit—Larry Fessenden wrote, directed, and stars in a thriller about a man whose mysterious new lover (Meredith Snaider) may or may not be a vampire. Opening Nov. 14. (Cinema Village.)

The Jackal—A suspense picture about an international assassin (Bruce Willis) and his adversaries (Richard Gere, Sidney Poitier, and Diane Verona). Directed by Michael Caton-Jones. Opening Nov. 14. (Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea West, Coronet Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, National Twin, and Orpheum VII.)

Kiss or Kill—Two con artists (Frances O'Connor and Matt Day) are caught up in several murders, in a thriller written and directed by Bill Bennett. Opening Nov. 14. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Quad Cinema.)

The Man Who Knew Too Little—A comedy in which an American in London (Bill Murray) becomes unwittingly (and obliviously) involved in an espionage caper. Directed by Jon Amiel. Opening Nov. 14. (Criterion Center and 64th and 2nd.)

The Mouse—A romantic comedy based on the actual career of a boxer (John Savage) who lost some three hundred matches. Written and directed by Daniel Adams. Opening Nov. 14. (Quad Cinema.)

Nick and Jane—A financial analyst (Dana Wheeler-Nicholson) hires a down-at-the-heels cabdriver (James McCaffrey) to pose as her lover, in a romantic comedy directed by Richard Mauro. Opening Nov. 14. (Sutton and Village East Cinemas.)

One Night Stand—Writer-director Mike Figgis's exploration of the consequences of a brief encounter. With Wesley Snipes, Nastassja Kinski, Robert Downey, Jr., Ming-Na Wen, and Kyle MacLachlan. Opening Nov. 14. (Criterion Center, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, and Village Theatre VII.)

Slaves of the Underground—The Seattle coffeehouse and club scene provides the backdrop for a romantic comedy directed by Kristine Peterson. Starring Molly Gross, Marisa Ryan, and Jason Bortz. Opening Nov. 14. (Quad Cinema.)

The Tango Lesson—The writer-director Sally Potter is also the star of this story about a film director captivated by the tango and by her teacher (the dancer Pablo Veron). Opening Nov. 14. (Angelika Film Center.)

FILM NOTES

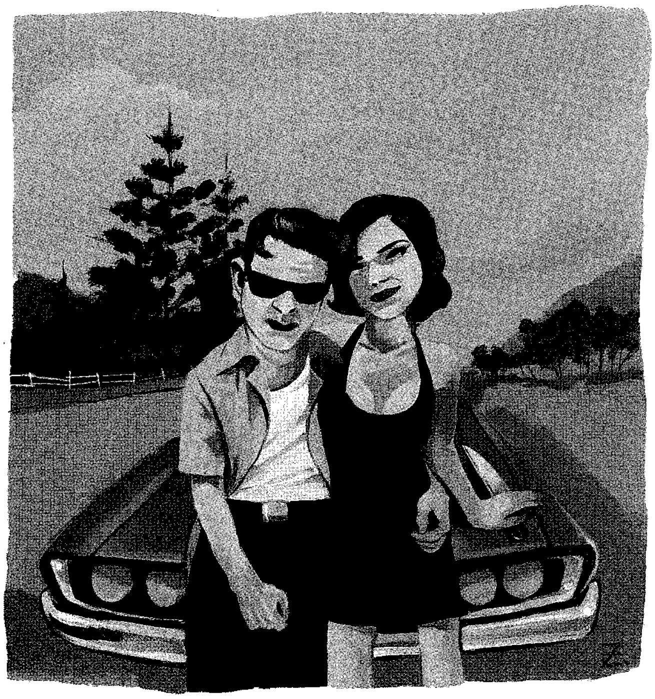
(If a movie has been reviewed recently in The Current Cinema, the date of its review is given.)

Artists and Models (1937)—A lavish mess of loosely strung together vaudeville acts and a story centering on the selection of a queen for a charity ball and on Jack Benny as the head of an advertising agency trying to land an account with a silverware company, run by Richard Arlen. The cast includes Louis Armstrong, Martha Raye, Ben Blue, Ida Lupino, Gail Patrick, Judy Canova, Connee Boswell, Peter Arno, and Rube Goldberg, but the plot makes you feel as if you're back in grammar school. Raoul Walsh directed. (There was actually a sequel the following year.)—*Pauline Kael* (Whitney Museum; Nov. 15-16.)

Bean—A comedy that brings Rowan Atkinson's madcap British TV character to the big screen. Directed by Mel Smith. (Chelsea Cinemas, Criterion Center, Lincoln Square, 72nd Street East, and Village Theatre VII.)

Boogie Nights—Mark Wahlberg (once better known as Marky Mark) is a busboy who becomes the most successful product of the porn producer Jack Horner, played with a rangy bantam cock's swagger by Burt Reynolds. Wahlberg, who plays his part with baffled sweetness, is surrounded by the most interesting ensemble cast since "The Player," including William H. Macy, Julianne Moore, and Heather Graham. The picture is set in Los Angeles in the late seventies and early eighties, and, in the hands of the talented young director Paul Thomas Anderson, it gradually takes on the feel of a "Nashville"-like epic.—*Daphne Merkin* (10/13/97) (Cinema I, Cinema 3rd Avenue, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, State, and Village East Cinemas.)

The Devil's Advocate—Keanu Reeves's blank acting style finds a fun, trashy vehicle in this thriller about a callow young Florida lawyer recruited to work at a Manhattan law firm run by Satan (Al Pacino, gamely parodying his shouting act from "Scent of a Woman"). The film's ridiculous premise is



Matt Day and Frances O'Connor in "Kiss or Kill."

ZOHAR LAZAR

partly redeemed by wit, and its denunciation of modern evil—found in tabloid TV, rampant plastic surgery, greedy yuppies, and the jury-rigging enablers we call lawyers—is surprisingly sincere. Directed by Taylor Hackford.—*Sarah Kerr* (Astor Plaza, 84th Street Sixplex, New York Twin, 19th Street East 6, Olympia, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Showplace, and Village East Cinemas.)

Eve's Bayou—For her first film, the writer and director Kasi Lemmons attempts to adapt Tennessee Williams's Southern-gothic style to an African-American context. Eve, the heroine (Jurnee Smollett), a ten-year-old bourgeois Creole in late-fifties rural Louisiana, is trying to understand why her mother (an intense, elegant Lynn Whitfield) is so frigid and why her beloved father (a subdued Samuel L. Jackson) is addicted to fooling around. Smollett has a pouty naturalness, and as long as the film sticks to Eve's point of view it's got a naïve charm. Unfortunately, Lemmons doesn't stop there: she mixes in Magic Realist fantasies of African voodoo, and she interrupts the story with black-and-white sequences that feel less poetic than arty.—*S.K.* (First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, State, and Waverly.)

Fast, Cheap & Out of Control—Errol Morris has made another unclassifiable documentary. This time around he focusses on a lion tamer, a topiary gardener, a mole-rat expert, and an M.I.T. robotics scientist, interweaving interviews with his eccentric but remarkably unkooky subjects with stock footage, old movies, and cartoons. The result is an alternately comic and haunting meditation.—*D.M.* (Film Forum 3.)

Flesh and the Devil (1927)—Greta Garbo, with pencil-line eyebrows above sex-drugged lids, plays a bored, sensual, wicked woman in a story about sacred and profane love, derived from a novel by Hermann Sudermann. It's far from a work of art, but Garbo was a blissfully beautiful twenty-one at the time, and no other actress went at the bodies of her leading men the way she did. This time John Gilbert and Lars Hanson each go a round with her. Clarence Brown directed; with Barbara Kent as the good girl. Silent.—*P.K.* (Museum of Modern Art; Nov. 15 and Nov. 17.)

The Full Monty—An amiable light comedy, directed by Peter Cattaneo, about six unemployed British steelworkers who mount an all-male strip show for cash. The script, by Simon Beaufoy, is clean and well developed. Each character is given his bit to do, and when the motley crew comes together the actors all work wonderfully with one another, finding a sexy, warm performance rhythm as they gyrate to some classic seventies disco. Two actors—Mark Addy, who plays an overweight, insecure worker, and Robert Carlyle, as the ringleader—are sensational.—*Bruce Diones* (Angelika Film Center, Coronet Cinemas, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and 19th Street East 6.)

Gattaca—A quiet, down-to-earth science-fiction drama about a future in which genetically engineered people get all the great jobs. Ethan Hawke plays a young man who swaps his genetic code with the superior-gened Jude Law and tries to pass himself off as a member of the élite. The murder-mystery plot moves along predictably; apparently, it, too, has been engineered. What makes the film distinctive is writer-director Andrew Niccol's cold, Antonioni-like vision of the future. With Uma Thurman.—*B.D.* (86th Street East Twin, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, State, and Village East Cinemas.)

Happy Together—The Hong Kong filmmaker Wong Kar-Wai's latest effort—a Buenos Aires love story gone wrong, starring two of Hong Kong's sexiest leading men, Tony Leung Chiu-Wai and Leslie Cheung Kwok-Wing—is an intoxicating blend of glossy nighttime visuals and loose melodramatic narrative that would give Douglas Sirk pause. Wong's erotic style strands his troubled characters in a romantic cul-de-sac. The film is a rare achievement, so drenched in melancholy it can make an audience swoon. In Cantonese and Mandarin.—*B.D.* (Quad Cinema.)

The Ice Storm—Ang Lee's treatment of Rick Moody's novel about suburban anomie is intelligent but curiously remote. Set in New Canaan, Connecticut, in 1973, it focusses on two troubled families, and it benefits from Lee's gently ironic touch: he's less interested in assigning blame for all the misery than in simply documenting the way it spreads and gets absorbed. With Kevin Kline, Joan Allen, Sigourney Weaver, and, among the adolescents, Elijah Wood and Christina Ricci.—*D.M.* (9/29/97) (Angelika Film Center, Chelsea Cinemas, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas. . . . ¶ Cinema II; through Nov. 13.)

In & Out—Kevin Kline is an Indiana high-school teacher, Joan Cusack is his long-suffering fiancée, and Matt Dillon is a student turned movie star who wins the best-actor Oscar and tells a TV audience of millions that his former teacher is gay. Paul Rudnick's script deals in deliberate stereotypes, but at least it's high-spirited and appealingly humane. And the supporting cast (which includes Tom Selleck as a smarmy gay journalist and Bob Newhart as the school's flustered principal) has a lot of fun. Directed by Frank Oz.—*S.K.* (Embassy 4, Lincoln Square, and Village Theatre VII.)

Kiss the Girls—We're in Hannibal Lecter land again, as sleuth Alex Cross (Morgan Freeman) goes after a psychopath who has just added Cross's niece to his collection of beautiful and defiant victims. One of them (Ashley Judd) manages to escape, thereby becoming the only link to the kidnappings. As a piece of suspense escapism, it's as smooth as they come, if a bit familiar, and Freeman has the screen presence to lend gravitas to the proceedings.—*D.M.* (10/13/97) (84th Street Sixplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, Orpheum VII, and State.)

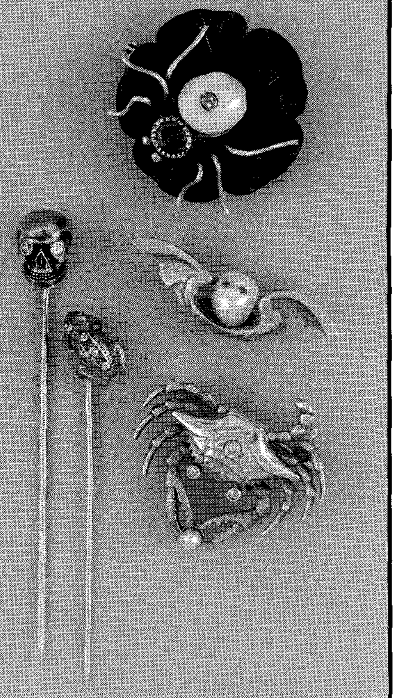
The Knowledge of Healing—A documentary about Tibetan medicine, directed by Franz Reichle. In Tibetan, Russian, Buryat, English, Swiss German, and German. (Film Forum; through Nov. 18.)

L.A. Confidential—Curtis Hanson's new thriller, set in Los Angeles in the early fifties, is about a group of cops who between them cover the full moral range, from the uptight integrity of Ed Exley (Guy Pearce) to the four-star sadism of Bud White (Russell Crowe). The plot, adapted from the James Ellroy novel, is both murky and tangled, yet the movie never bogs down. Hanson paces the tale with ease, decorating it with one neat performance after another: James Cromwell as the smiling police chief, David Strathairn as an oily pimp, Kim Basinger as one of his prize charges, and, better still, Kevin Spacey as a "celebrity crime-stopper" who gets dragged into the dark and dirty.—*Anthony Lane* (9/22/97) (Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, New York Twin, Orpheum VII, State, and Village Theatre VII.)

The Little Mermaid (1989)—Disney-style kitsch. It's technologically sophisticated, but with just about all the simpering old Disney values in place. They're just slightly updated: the Little Mermaid—a teen-age tootsie in a flirty seashell bra—is like Sleeping Beauty plus tomboy spunk. The film does have a cheerful calypso number ("Under the Sea," by Howard Ashman and Alan Menken), and the color is bright—at least, until the mermaid goes on land, when everything seems to dull out.—*P.K.* (Cinema II, 84th Street Sixplex, 86th Street East Twin, Embassy 2, 19th Street East 6, and Village East Cinemas; starting Nov. 14.)

Mad City—John Travolta and Dustin Hoffman play a desperate out-of-work security guard and a demoted investigative television reporter, respectively, in a drama directed by Costa-Gavras. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) (Chelsea West, Criterion Center, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, Orpheum VII, and Village Theatre VII.)

The Murder of Fred Hampton (1971)—An incendiary cinéma-vérité tribute to the chairman of the Illinois Black Panther Party, who was killed in his bed at the age of twenty-one



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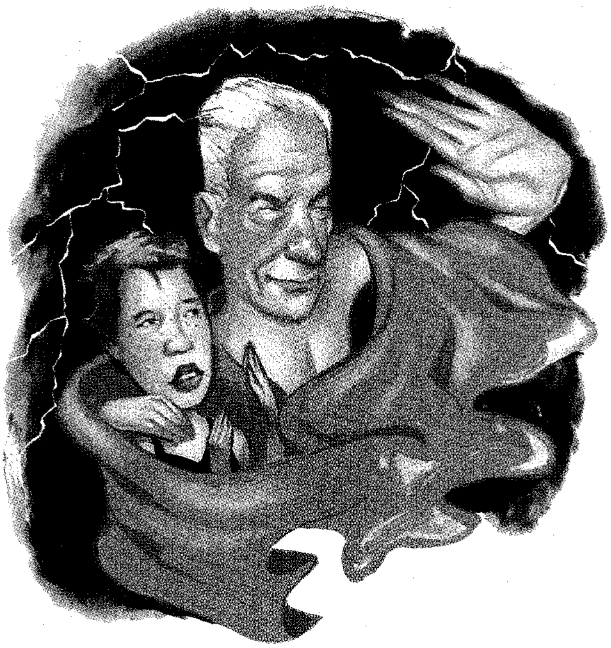
during a 1969 police raid to uncover a Panther weapons stash. The filmmaker, Mike Gray, arrives with his camera before the blood has dried. The sight of Hampton's crash pad—slogans sprayed on the walls, LPs scattered over the floor—newly decorated with blood stains and bullet holes, summons forth memories of the sixties home front the way the image of a helicopter whirring above the jungle brings back Vietnam. In the first half, Gray portrays Hampton as a humane socialist preaching a grass-roots revolution; in the second, he follows Hampton's supporters as they try to expose what they consider a state homicide. As the State's Attorney keeps trying to put up a granite façade of propriety, the official investigation (or coverup, depending on your point of view) produces moments of what can only be called black comedy.—*Michael Sragow* (Film Forum 2; Nov. 17.)



At the Museum of Modern Art, Molly Ringwald and John Cassavetes in Paul Mazursky's "Tempest."

TIM BOWER

Never Give a Sucker an Even Break (1941)—W. C. Fields in his prime. Like "The Bank Dick" of the year before, this one deals with making a movie. The movie Fields wants to make is set in a Ruritania in the clouds that is native American surrealism—comic-strip foolishness and then some. Up there, he encounters the great-bosomed comic divinity, Margaret Dumont. The film also has its horror: an erstwhile ingénue named Gloria Jean. You can't just shut your eyes, because she *sings.* With Leon Errol; directed by Edward Cline.—*P.K.* (Walter Reade Theatre; Nov. 16.)

Red Corner—Jon Avnet's thriller stars Richard Gere as an entertainment attorney in China who must prove he did not commit murder. (Art Greenwich Twin, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Olympia, Orpheum VII, and 34th Street Showplace. . . . ¶ Ziegfeld; through Nov. 13.)

Seven Years in Tibet—Brad Pitt plays Heinrich Harrer, the mountaineer upon whose memoirs the movie is loosely based. After his escape from a British P.O.W. camp in India and a gruelling two-year trek, Harrer arrives in Tibet and is befriended by the young Dalai Lama. Pitt seems at a loss except when called upon to flirt or preen; Jean-Jacques Annaud directs with a fluid style, but the characters can't hold their own against the scenery.—*D.M.* (East 85th Street, Lincoln Square, and Village Theatre VII. . . . ¶ Criterion Center; through Nov. 13.)

Small Change (1976)—François Truffaut's series of sketches on the general theme of the resilience of children turns out to be that rarity—a poetic comedy that's really funny. Truffaut's deadpan, disjointed style is quicker and surer than ever before; the kids seem to be photographed in the act of inventing slapstick. There's a serious side (the story of a mistreated boy) that's a failure, and Truffaut's view of childhood innocence has elements of middle-class preciousness, but the jokes make the film worth seeing. In French.—*P.K.* (Symphony Space; Nov. 18.)

Starship Troopers—Paul Verhoeven's adventure about interplanetary war between humans and alien insects. (Chelsea Cinemas, Criterion Center, 84th Street Sixplex, Metro Cinema, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, 34th Street Showplace, and Village Theatre VII.)

Washington Square—With its dark interiors, ticking clocks, and buttoned-up style, this film by Agnieszka Holland ("The Secret Garden") can't be faulted for not being true to the spirit of Henry James. Holland has yanked everything up a tonal notch from "The Heiress," William Wyler's cold and gleaming 1949 version, to accentuate the dissolving ironies of the story; she is good at underlining the emotional and physical discomfort of the hoodwinked heiress Catherine Sloper (Jennifer Jason Leigh, looking irredeemably plain and acting suitably clumsy), and the sleekly ingratiating ways of the fortune seeker Morris Townsend (Ben Chaplin). But in the end Holland's interpretation of James's vision seems less profound than arbitrarily dismal, as though someone had decided to gaze at life through brown lenses and then wondered bitterly why the color had gone out of everything.—*D.M.* (Angelika Film Center and Paris.)

The Wings of the Dove—The director Iain Softley's decision to move the action of Henry James's magisterial late novel up eight years, to 1910, was a good one: the London Underground had just been completed, and it's a pleasure to watch the penniless Kate Croy (Helena Bonham Carter) bump into her lover, the muckraking journalist Merton Densher (Linus Roache), on a crowded subway car rather than suffer the conversational longueurs of a Merchant Ivory-style drawing room. But what starts out as a jazzy, confident effort gets a bit sluggish with the entrance of Milly Theale (Alison Elliott), the rich, good-hearted American orphan whom Kate persuades Densher to seduce in order to secure their future together. Elliott, an ex-model, doesn't have the depth to convey Milly's galvanizing goodness, which is the key to everything that does—and doesn't—happen in James's story, and this deficiency threatens to undo the film, despite its glorious costumes and all that golden Venice light.—*D.M.* (11/10/97) (Angelika Film Center, Beekman, and Lincoln Square.)

Zero for Conduct (1933)—School as seen through the eyes of children. Jean Vigo's forty-four-minute comedy-fantasy about a schoolchildren's revolt is one of the most poetic films ever made and one of the most influential, both in theme (as in Truffaut's "The 400 Blows" and Lindsay Anderson's "If . . .") and in its leaping continuity (as in Godard's "Breathless"). Vigo, himself, was clearly influenced by Abel Gance's pillow-fight sequence in "Napoléon." In French.—*P.K.* (Symphony Space; Nov. 18.)

ALSO PLAYING

BEAUMARCHAIS, THE SCOUNDREL: Lincoln Plaza Cinemas. . . . **COLD AROUND THE HEART:** Village East Cinemas. . . . **CONSPIRACY THEORY** (reviewed in our issue of 8/18/97): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **COP LAND** (8/18/97): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **CRITICAL CARE:** Chelsea West, Coronet Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and Quad Cinema. . . . **THE DELI:** Sutton. . . . **EVENT HORIZON:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **FAIRY TALE: A TRUE STORY:** Chelsea Cinemas, East 85th Street, Guild, Lincoln Square, and Village Theatre VII. . . . **THE GAME:** Embassy 3. . . . **THE HOUSE OF YES:** Eastside Playhouse, Regency, and Village East Cinemas. . . . **I KNOW WHAT YOU DID LAST SUMMER:** Chelsea Cinemas, Criterion Center, Lincoln Square, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, and Village Theatre VII. . . . **A LIFE LESS ORDINARY** (11/3/97): Angelika Film Center. . . . **THE MATCHMAKER:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **MRS. BROWN** (8/4/97): 62nd & Broadway. . . . **THE PEACEMAKER** (10/6/97): National Twin. . . . **PICTURE PERFECT:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **PLAYING GOD:** Gotham Cinema. . . . **SHALL WE DANCE?:** Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Quad Cinema. . . . **SHE'S SO LOVELY** (9/8/97): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **SICK: THE LIFE AND DEATH OF BOB FLANAGAN, SUPERMASOCHIST:** Angelika Film Center. . . . **SOUL FOOD:** National Twin. . . . **SWITCHBACK:** 84th Street Sixplex, 86th Street East Twin, Embassy 1, 59th Street East Cinema, Metro Cinema, and Village Theatre VII. . . . **TELLING LIES IN AMERICA:** Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and The Screening Room.

THEATRE ADDRESSES

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(For show times, call 777-FILM, except where noted.)

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St.
Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th St.
Astor Plaza, 44th St. at Broadway.
Beekman, Second Ave. at 66th St.
Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd St.
Chelsea West, 333 W. 23rd St.
Cinema I, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema II, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema 3rd Avenue, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th St.
Coronet Cinemas, Third Ave. at 59th St.
Criterion Center, Broadway at 44th St.
East 85th Street, First Ave. at 85th St.
Eastside Playhouse, Third Ave. at 55th St.
84th Street Sixplex, Broadway at 84th St.
86th Street East Twin, Third Ave. at 86th St.
Embassy 1, Broadway at 46th St.
Embassy 2, 3, and 4, Seventh Ave. at 47th St.
59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th St.
Film Forum, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110).
First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd St.
Gotham Cinema, Third Ave. at 58th St.
Guild, 33 W. 50th St.
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, Broadway at 63rd St. (757-2280).
Lincoln Square, Broadway at 68th St.
Metro Cinema 1 and 2, Broadway at 99th St.
Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th St.
National Twin, Broadway at 44th St.
New York Twin, Second Ave. at 67th St.
19th Street East 6, Broadway at 19th St.
Olympia I and II, Broadway at 107th St.
Orpheum VII, Third Ave. at 86th St.
Paris, 4 W. 58th St. (688-3800).
Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th St.
Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th St.
Regency, Broadway at 67th St.
The Screening Room, 54 Varick St. (334-2100).
62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd St.
64th and 2nd, Second Ave. at 64th St.
72nd Street East, Third Ave. at 71st St.
State, Broadway at 45th St.
Sutton 1 and 2, Third Ave. at 57th St.
34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th St.
Village East Cinemas, Second Ave. at 12th St.
Village Theatre VII, Third Ave. at 11th St.
Waverly 1 and 2, Sixth Ave. at 3rd St.
Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between Eighth and Ninth Aves.
Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th St.

REVIVALS, CLASSICS, ETC.

(Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.)

Film Forum 2, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110)—Through Nov. 13: "In Cold Blood" (1967, Richard Brooks). . . . Nov. 14-16: "Showman" (1962, Albert and David Maysles), "A Visit with Truman Capote" (1965, the Maysles and Charlotte Zwerin), and "Meet Marlon Brando" (1965, the Maysles and Zwerin). . . . Nov. 17: "The Murder of Fred Hampton" (†), "Chiefs" (1968, Richard Leacock and Noel E. Parmentel, Jr.), and "And This Is Free" (1964, Mike Shea). . . . Nov. 18: "So This Is Africa" (1933, Edward Cline) and "The Woman I Stole" (1933, Irving Cummings).

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—A program of new films from Germany; most in German, with English subtitles. Nov. 13 at 2:30: "Hotel Morgana" (Martin Hansen). . . . Nov. 13 at 6: "Obsession" (Peter Sehr). . . . Nov. 14 at 6 and Nov. 16 at 5: "Rococo" (Ulrike Pfeiffer). . . . Nov. 15 at 2:30: "Exile Shanghai" (Ulrike Ottinger; in English, German, and Mandarin). . . . ¶ Nov. 13 at 6:30 and Nov. 14 at 3: "A Sheepherder's Coming Home" (1997, Allen Moore and Lou Werner). . . . ¶ Nov. 14 and Nov. 16 at 2:30: "Irene" (1926, Alfred E. Green; silent). . . . ¶ Nov. 14 at 8: "The Sorrows of Satan" (1926, D. W. Griffith; silent). . . . ¶ Nov. 14 at 8: "Bonjour Tristesse" (1958, Otto Preminger). . . . ¶ Nov. 15 at 2:30: "What Price Glory?" (1926, Raoul Walsh; silent). . . . ¶ Nov. 15 at 5 and Nov. 17 at 6: "Flesh and the Devil" (†). . . . ¶ Nov. 17 at 2:30: "Moana" (1926, Robert Flaherty; silent). . . . ¶ Nov. 17 at 6:30: A program of films by Jim Trainor, who will be present. . . . ¶ Nov. 18 at 2:30: "Tempest" (1982, Paul Mazursky). . . . ¶ Nov. 18 at 6: "Girl with Hyacinths" (1950, Hasse Ekman; in Swedish).

Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center (875-5600)—A program of films directed by Andrei Konchalovsky. Nov. 12 at 2 and 6:45 and Nov. 14 at 4:15 and 9: "Romance of the Lovers" (1974; in Russian). . . . Nov. 12 at 4:30 and 9:20 and Nov. 14 at 2 and 6:50: "Runaway Train" (1985). . . . Nov. 16 at 4 and 8:30, Nov. 17 at 8:30, and Nov. 18 at 2: "Maria's Lovers" (1984). . . . Nov. 16 at 6:10, Nov. 17 at 6:15, and Nov. 18 at 4: "Shy People" (1987). . . . ¶ Nov. 16 at 2: "Never Give a Sucker an Even Break" (†).

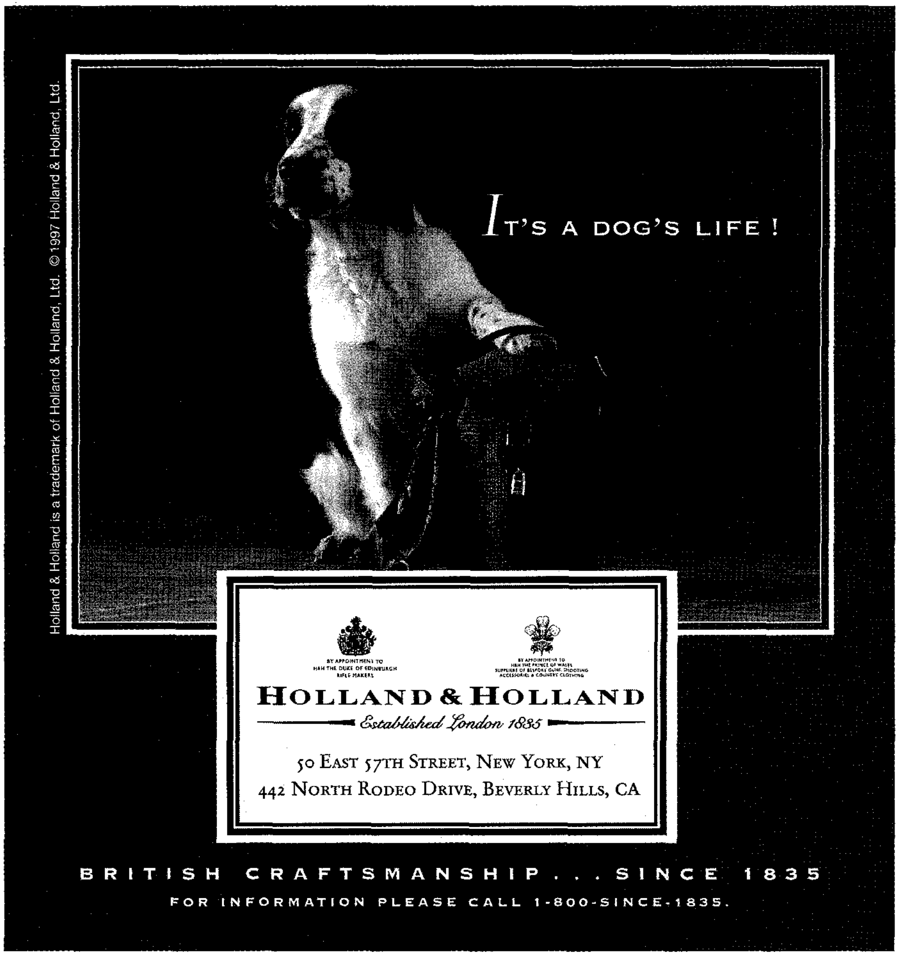
American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—Nov. 15 at 2: "Arguing the World" (1997, Joseph Dorman). . . . Nov. 15 at 4:30: "The Chosen" (1981, Jeremy Kagan). . . . Nov. 16 at 2: "New York Ghetto Fish Market 1903" (1997, Ken Jacobs). . . . Nov. 16 at 4:30: "A Life Apart: Hasidism in America" (1997, Menachem Daum and Oren Rudavsky).

Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. (864-5400)—Nov. 18 at 7: "Small Change" (†). . . . Nov. 18 at 9: "Zero for Conduct" (†).

From Paris to Hollywood—The Alliance Française presents a series of French films (shown in Florence Gould Hall) alongside the American films based on them (shown in Tinker Auditorium). Nov. 18 at 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, and 9: "La Femme Nikita" (1990, Luc Besson). . . . Nov. 18 at 6:15 and 8:45: "The Point of No Return" (1993, John Badham). (Both at 55 E. 59th St. 355-6160.)

A Different Light Bookstore, 151 W. 19th St.—A Sunday-night series of free films (and popcorn). On Nov. 16 at 7, the feature will be "Desperately Seeking Susan" (1985, Susan Seidelman).

Whitney Museum, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—Nov. 12 and Nov. 14 at 11:30 and Nov. 13 at 6:15: "Blonde Venus" (1932, Josef von Sternberg). . . . Nov. 12-14 at 1:30: "Three Broadway Girls" (1932, Lowell Sherman). . . . Nov. 12-14 at 3:30: "Fashions of 1934" (William Dieterle). . . . Nov. 15-16 at 11:30: "Artists and Models" (†). . . . Nov. 15-16 at 1:30: "Artists and Models Abroad" (1938, Mitchell Leisen). . . . Nov. 15-16 at 3:30: "Roberta" (1935, William A. Seiter).



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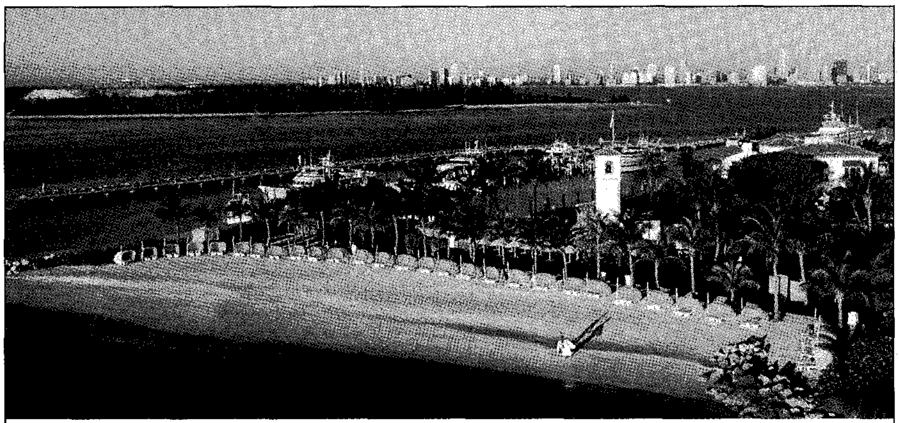

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THE
NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

WIND ON CAPITOL HILL

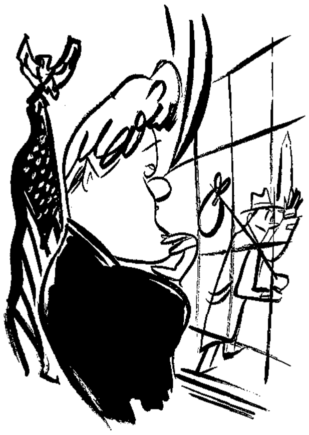
The incredible shrinking Administration of President Bill Clinton.

EVERYBODY knows that decades rarely run on schedule. The eighties didn't really start until 1982, when the bull market began, while the sixties ended in 1969, with Altamont, or in 1972, with Watergate. This sort of calendrical disregard obtains in politics, too. As the first year of the second Clinton term—an uneventful year, unencumbered by meaning—comes to a close, and the possibility looms that the next three years could be just as torpid, it's tempting to say out loud what most Beltway types secretly believe: that the Clinton Administration isn't merely in the doldrums—it's over.

Not literally, of course. "Over" in the sense that the Carter Administration was over the day the hostages were taken in Teheran; that the Reagan Administration was over once the Iran-contra scandal broke; that the Bush Administration was over after the Gulf War. "Over" in the sense of "all over but the shouting"—or, in Clinton's case, the schmoozing.

The best evidence that this is true is the common sight these days of senior White House officials packing their bags. When an Administration stretches over two terms, the exit of Presidential adjutants is not unusual. Yet the customary time for setting off after fame and riches (Stephanopoulos), or being banished to a hell of bitterness and legal bills (Ickes), is the period right after reëlection. Instead, many on the White House staff stuck around, only to find themselves now, a year later, colliding as they head for the door. Rahm Emanuel and John Hilley, senior advisers; Erskine Bowles, the chief of staff; Mike McCurry, the press secretary; Doug Sosnik, the counsellor to the President; and Michael Waldman, the chief speech writer—all either have declared that they are going or are widely rumored to be going. And there are others. "The question isn't 'Who's leaving?' " a recent White House departee remarked, "but 'Is anyone staying?' "

Why are the rats fleeing a ship that is, according to the polls, perfectly watertight? For one thing, the President's handlers now consider the Clinton legacy secure. The federal budget has been balanced, taxes have been cut, welfare reformed, the bureaucracy trimmed, the economy stoked, the environment protected, the children saved. What's left to do? Cope with scandals—hence the second explanation for the exodus. For the White House staff, the endless series of investigations are a pain. (For Republicans, they are the very reason to get up in the morning.) Indeed, the experiences of the Nixon and Reagan Administrations suggest that, once scandal becomes the main thing, it becomes the only thing, reducing the Administration to a life-size working model—equipped with moving parts but going nowhere.



Bill Clinton

Curiously, the stampede out of the White House has not been confined to the President's men: Al Gore's staff has been similarly depopulated. Since the election, Gore has lost his chief domestic-policy adviser, his lead speechwriter, his legislative director, and the head of his reinventing-government task force; his communications director is on her way out. Scandalabra probably played a part here, too. Yet those leaving the Vice-President's staff seem less often to be escaping than to be "Simonizing"—a term employed in the Gore camp to describe the strategy of Greg Simon, Gore's former cyber-policy guru, who is spending some lucrative time in the private sector before being called back into service in 2000. Simonizing is a sound economic decision; it's also a sign that even Gore's loyalists believe that the next three years in the White House will be less than action-packed.

And so, it sometimes seems, does Clinton himself. Not long ago, the President and the First Lady made a trip to Little Rock to check out two potential sites for the Clinton Presidential library. At a fund-raiser that weekend, Clinton said of his critics, "They'll be shed of me soon enough." Elvis may not have left the building. But in some ways he may be right there with so many on his staff: in the departure lounge. —JOHN HEILEMANN

INK

Has the colorized Times changed the complexion of opening night?

AT about ten-thirty on the evening of October 30th, Jeffrey Richards, the press agent for the Off-Broadway production "Two Pianos, Four Hands," did what he does every time he has an opening: he went to the *Times* to pick up the following morning's review. But the *Times*' lobby, where he was expecting to find the usual small crowd waiting for the first edition, was deserted. "I asked the man at the desk," Richards says, "and he said that the paper is now printed at College Point and doesn't come in until one-thirty."

Exit a New York type—the press agent

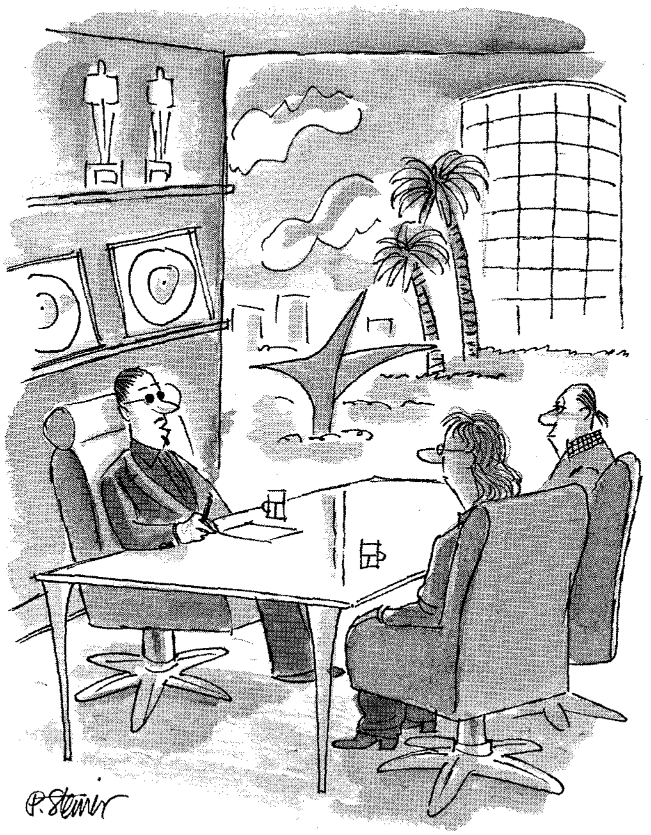
ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM BACHTELL

with a torn-out review tucked in his breast pocket, skulking into his show's first-night party to share the news with the producers. Since the *Times* started using its new color-printing presses in Queens, obtaining copies of theatrical reviews on opening night has become considerably less theatrical. Computer wonkery has come to Broadway: the *Times* now uses E-mail to send reviews, by 10:30 P.M., to show-business advertising agencies, which like to incorporate critics' blurbs in the next day's radio spots. Although one could employ a runner to bring the verdict from the ad agency to the party, so far that doesn't seem to be happening, and the performers are left to down champagne at the opening-night celebration, blissfully insulated.

All this is a long way from the old days, when producers giddily clambered onto tables at Sardi's to declaim the words of Brooks Atkinson hot off the presses. Of course, sometimes even back then the first edition wasn't early enough. "In the sixties, we used to call the obituary department for the reviews," the agent Shirley Herz remembers. "And lots of times somebody in the pressroom, who I don't think got past first or second grade, would read it. If there was anything longer than a two-syllable word, you were lost." The *Times* became stricter about leaks in the mid-eighties, Frank Rich, the former theatre critic, says, "after a famous incident when one of the paper's top editors went to the opening of a musical called 'Song & Dance,' and the producer walked up to him just before the lights went down and said, 'We hear the review is: *Like* Bernadette Peters, *hate* the show.'" This season, a new, appropriately high-tech method of sneaking an early look is emerging: one publicist says that he had a fax of the *Times* review in hand before the curtain went up, having received it from an out-of-town newspaper that subscribes to the *Times*' wire service, whose clients get the next day's arts coverage in the late afternoon.

Press agents seem not to mind the new system; most profess relief that they no longer have to bear the burden of early knowledge. "The main thing is that the opening-night party is better," Richard Kornberg, who represents the New York Theatre Workshop, says. "Now, even if the producers have a bad review, at least they will have a good party."

—REBECCA MEAD



"He's Richard Gere without the principles."

HONOR SYSTEM

Benefit etiquette: Who knew that being an honoree was such hard work?

WHAT do Tom Brokaw, Rosie O'Donnell, Aerosmith, Edgar Bronfman, Jr., Ed Koch, Muhammad Ali, Jane Fonda, Jellybean Benitez, Nancy Kissinger, and Michael Eisner's late mother have in common? They've all been honorees at benefit dinners during this social season. But nobody has been honored more often than Harry Belafonte, who is scheduled to be an honoree four times this month. His only recent rival is Felix Rohatyn. Last year around this time, Rohatyn, after being honored three times in one week, took ill.

"I know what you've got," said his wife, Elizabeth, who has since moved with him to France, where prominent citizens are not used as benefit bait. "You've got honoritis."

Rohatyn had plenty of competition on the plaque-and-plate circuit last year. The Weinstein Brothers, Harvey and Bob, the co-chairmen of Miramax Films, were honored three times. At a benefit for the Robert F. Kennedy Memorial, a humanitarian organization, Al Gore made an awkward leap of syntax that patched cause and honorees together—a not uncommon challenge for benefit organizers. "Our nation and our world were changed profoundly by Robert F. Kennedy," the Vice-President said, in a movie theatre doused with Kennedys and movie stars, "and in many ways it is that vision that is being recognized with the honor extended to Harvey and Bob."

Then Caroline Kennedy Schlossberg, looking a little like Vanna White, handed Bob a Waterford-crystal bowl, and Ethel Kennedy gave one to Harvey.

"Pretty nice for two kids who grew up in Flushing," Harvey Weinstein said.

A bowl from a Kennedy. It appears far simpler than it actually is, because in most cases if you accept an honor from a nonprofit organization in a time of government cutbacks you are accepting some responsibility for that organization's financial well-being. In other words, if you take the honor tonight, you'd better take the phone call next week. You may even end up taking the chairmanship of the event next year—the worst job of all.

In some cultures, entire economies were based on similar laws of unspoken obligation, such as the potlatch of Pacific Northwest Native Americans. Today, honoring is both a science and a war. "The competition is ferocious," Lawrence S. Huntington, the chairman of Fiduciary Trust, says. "The question is 'Who will be the biggest draw?' " Up to a year before a benefit, a committee begins considering honorees, using such criteria as merit, appropriateness, drawing power, and financial promise. Sometimes talent agencies are contacted, to see which celebrities might be available. One event planner says, "There are fewer and fewer people who are willing to be honored, and the honorees who are good are sought after again and again."

William Styron, for example, is frequently solicited. "You have to decide which awards to accept," Styron said at a benefit last winter for Poets and Writers. "I've turned down lots of them because they seemed to be pointless. You know you're being exploited." In his hand he held a plaque he'd just been awarded. In his lapel was an odd-shaped red pin from the Légion d'Honneur.

"That pin looks like a tomato," said George Plimpton, who had a green pin from France's Ordre des Arts et des Lettres in his lapel.

"Yours looks like spinach," Styron said.

Once an honoree accepts (tag, you're it!), he or she is usually asked to provide a list of people to be invited who will buy tables for ten or fifteen thousand dollars each.

Celebrities, of course, are the wampum of the honoring culture. But they can also be trouble. Some of them have dietary obsessions. Some can't be relied on to make a decent speech. Many have security and paparazzi issues. Others, like Belafonte, who won't be around to receive his final award of the month, from the Arts & Business Council (Mario Cuomo was persuaded to accept for him), have scheduling conflicts. Robert Einbeck, the co-founder of the Time for Peace Award, got in over his head with a celebrity in 1995. Stevie Wonder had agreed to accept an award for encouraging world peace through his music, but someone forgot to make travel arrangements. Two days before the ceremony, Wonder was in Seoul, according to Einbeck, who says that he had to pay thirty-five thousand dollars to fly him and his entourage home.

Harry Belafonte

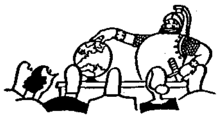
So far this season, the Manhattan honoree roll is up to more than sixty. That's about ten a week. Naturally, some people are feeling strained. "It's a disquieting form of mercantilism," Jay Iselin, the president of Cooper Union, says. "The tax laws drive an enterprise that is in many ways dreadful, but it produces results."

Pat Buckley, the city's queen mother of fund-raising, is more sanguine. "Let's face it," she said the other day. "It's a way to make money." Buckley makes a rule of not accepting any honors. But she has her own technique for getting her friends to come to the benefits she has chaired.

"I handwrite a note first," she said. "Then, after giving them some time to simmer down, I call." —BOB MORRIS

POSTSCRIPT

Remembering Sir Isaiah Berlin: A guest from the future.



SIR ISAIAH BERLIN'S childhood memories of Petrograd in 1917 were of fever and fanaticism, of rifle fire echoing off the pastel façades along the Neva, the sight of "a policeman being dragged off, pale and struggling, by a mob, obviously to his death"—all in the service of an Idea. Berlin, who died last week in Oxford at eighty-eight, was celebrated in his obituaries as a man of parts—as political philosopher and historian of ideas, as Zionist and liberal, as teacher and world-class talker—but his contribution, above all, was to prevent eternal repetition of the scenes of his childhood by deepening our understanding of pluralism in a century made brutal by the all-consuming political idea.

Berlin himself published no singular work, no magnum opus, but, rather, a scattershot of luminous essays on Russian intellectuals, on the varieties of political liberty and the origins of fascism, on the Enlightenment and its critics, Italian opera, the lives of Weizmann and Churchill. "I always think I have written nothing at all, and then someone comes along and clears out another one of my desk drawers," he said. On his eighty-fifth birthday he remarked that he had been "overestimated," though, he added, "I will not pretend that this has been a source of grave distress."

Not long after I returned from four years in Moscow, a friend of Berlin's asked if I would like to go visit him at his apartment on the East Side. The first piece of Berlin's writing I had ever read was his essay recounting his visits in 1945 and 1946 to the two great Russian poets Boris Pasternak and Anna Akhmatova. He compared them to shipwrecked survivors living out their lives on an unreachable island. Berlin was a British diplomat in the Soviet Union at the time. (It is said that his wartime dispatches to London were Churchill's favorite reading.) Akhmatova fell in love with Berlin and she later revised one of her greatest works, "Poem Without a Hero," to include him as a figure from another world, "the Guest from the Future." For Akhmatova, Berlin represented a hope of enlightenment, and she was crushed when, in 1956, he came again to Russia and told her he had married. Stalin reacted furiously to the Akhmatova-Berlin meetings, remarking, "I see that our nun"—as he mockingly called the poet—"now receives foreign spies."

Foolishly, I thought Berlin wanted to know what had been going on in Moscow. Not quite. He greeted me at the door in uniform (three-piece suit, watch fob, handkerchief). His small talk amounted to this: "Yes. You. Russia. And so . . ."

He flopped down on the couch and talked for two hours. Like one of those jazzmen whose mastery of circular-breathing technique allows them to hold a note indefinitely, Berlin's talk included no pause, no meaningful silence. He began with a fuller exposition of the Akhmatova story, moved on to his favorite, Aleksandr Herzen, then a quick zig to some contemporary prose writers, a zag to the intricacies of the new Russian politics, and finally a string of anecdotes about Belinsky, Turgenev, Bakunin, and Gogol that came so fast I could not quite register any one of them in full. Beyond the stories themselves, there was Berlin's undisguised delight in the new Russian future.

"I love England—it's home," he said. "But I am a Russian Jew. That's how I started, and that is how I will end my life." In fact, Berlin ended his life knowing that he was right about the big things—about Zionism, about liberalism. Above all, there was pleasure in knowing that the revolutionary scene of his childhood—that vulgar deus ex machina, as Nabokov called it—had ended. —DAVID REMNICK

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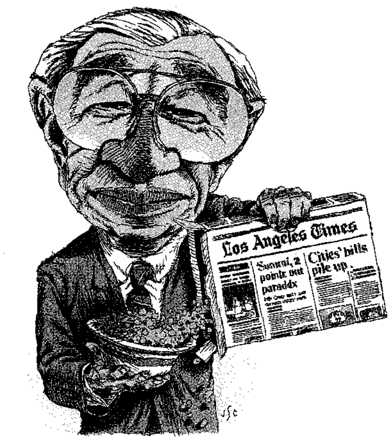
DEMOLITION MAN

Mark Willes tore down the traditional wall between editorial and advertising. Will that save the L.A. Times?

BY KEN AULETTA



Willes hopes to ventilate the inbred culture of journalism.

JOHN CUNEO

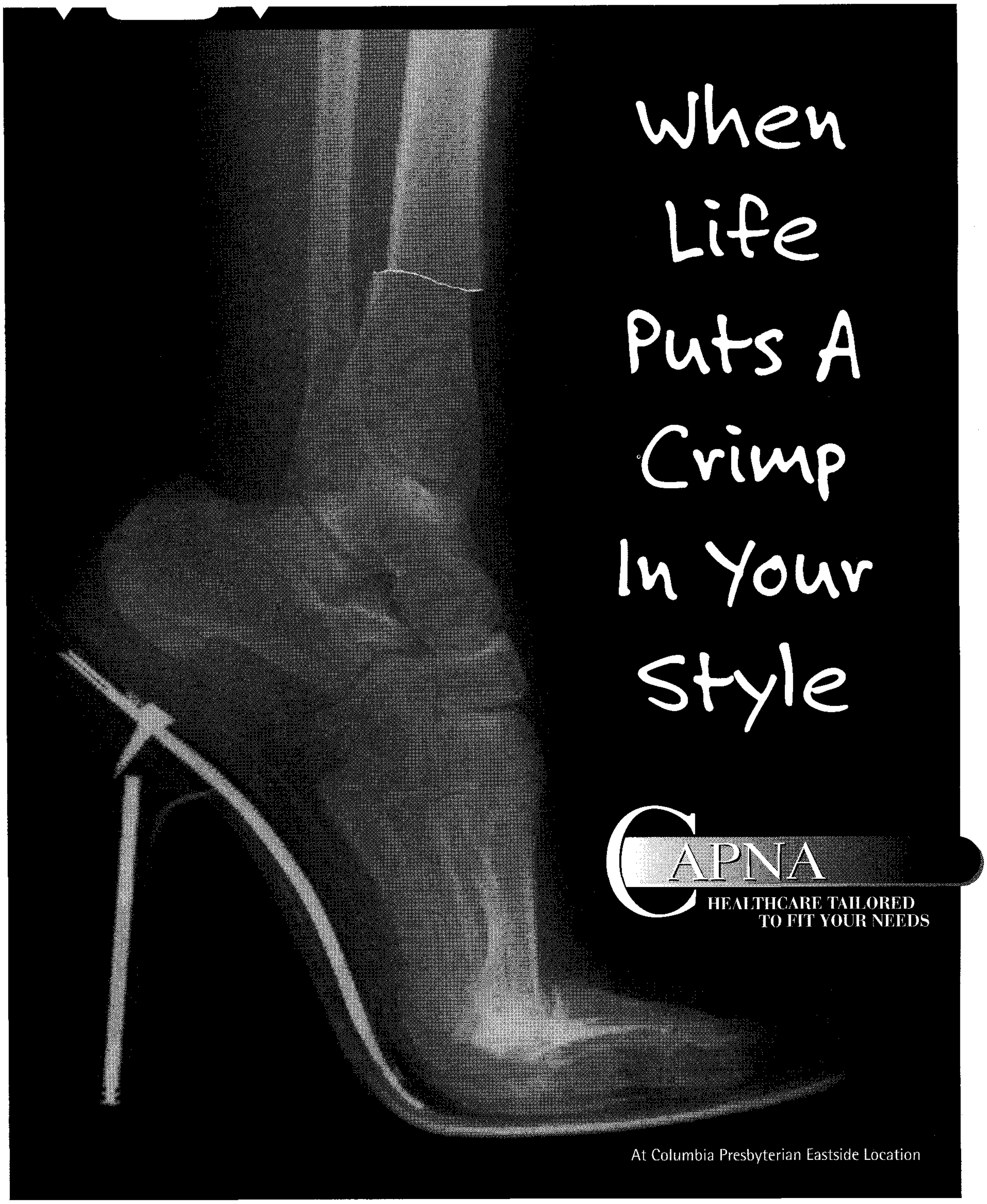
When Debora Vrana, a business reporter for the Los Angeles *Times*, arrived at her office on October 15th, she found a press release from an advertiser along with a note from an advertising-sales executive asking, "Could this run on page two or three?" The note arrived just days after the *Times*' new publisher, Mark H. Willes, announced a major reorganization—one meant to tear down the traditional wall separating the business and editorial sides of the newspaper—and the resignation of the editor, Shelby Coffey III. Vrana raced to the office of William Sing, the business editor, who hurried to talk to Leo Wolinsky, the managing editor, who got in touch with Michael Parks, Coffey's replacement.

As it turned out, Parks recalled last week, "it appears to have been a naïve mistake by someone who heard, 'There are no walls.' " Janis Heaphy, the senior vice-president for sales and marketing, concurs, saying, "It was human error." The newsroom, though, feared that barbarians were already at the door. After all, Willes, a former executive with General Mills, had revealed his plan to elevate managers from the business side to work alongside Parks and the editors of the newspaper's many sections. By doing so, Willes said, he hoped to reduce bureaucracy and ventilate the often inbred culture of journalism, and, by aligning the paper with civic causes—one definition of "civic journalism"—make it more a part of Southern California's sprawling communities while "simultaneously continuing to protect our editorial integrity and journalistic quality."

Outside the paper, Willes, who is also the chairman and C.E.O. of the paper's parent company, Times Mirror, was pummelled. The headline in *Time* magazine's account of the changes referred to Willes as "CAP'N CRUNCH." The New York *Times* headline announced "A GROWING CLASH OF VISIONS AT THE LOS ANGELES TIMES." Benjamin Bradlee, the former executive editor of the Washington *Post*, says of Willes, "He alarms me, because in his vision of civic journalism what's good for the community and what's good for the advertiser are an inch apart. He has no commitment to the pursuit of the truth. I say this when I never met the man, but he worries me. He doesn't feel like he's trespassing if he gets into a newsroom."

The man at the center of this seemed slightly bruised when we met last week in his office. Willes, who is fifty-six, has a full head of perfectly combed gray hair, and he wore rimless, oversized eyeglasses that reflected the light from a floor-to-ceiling window that yields a vista of downtown L.A. and the San Gabriel Mountains. "One of the things that have struck me as a little odd about the coverage that we've had is that people are rushing to judgment," he said. "All of the things we're changing are on the business side, yet everybody thinks that somehow it's the editorial side that we are going to mess up. There must be a way to have truly great journalism and a great business enterprise."

What Willes is trying to do has huge implications both for the nation's second-largest metropolitan newspaper and for journalism itself. Willes and his allies think that their critics are armchair gen-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erals, but it may be Willes who turns out to be the naïf. Willes, after all, is doing more than rearranging his newsroom; he is assuming that his restructuring won't erode the editorial independence of his newspaper. At the same time, he is betting his three-billion-dollar company that newspapers can grow when circulation in the United States has fallen by ten per cent in the last dozen years.

When Mark Willes was appointed chairman and C.E.O. of Times Mirror, in May of 1995, few noticed that he had a Ph.D. in economics from Columbia University, or that for two years he had been a professor at the Wharton School and for eleven years a member of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, including three years as the bank's president. What stood out was that for fifteen years at General Mills Willes had served as the company's chief number cruncher, and that he was born in Utah and had been reared a Mormon. (His uncle, Gordon B. Hinckley, is the president of the Mormon Church.) Willes immediately announced that at Times Mirror he expected to double operating profit margins and "grow our earnings per share by fifty per cent in 1996," and that each of the company's businesses—seven newspapers, magazines and specialty publications, book publishing, cable-television programming, professional-information services, and consumer multimedia—"must earn at least a twelve per cent return on capital." He was quickly typed as a dollars-and-cents character right out of Sinclair Lewis. "Below his eyes were semicircular hollows, as though silver dollars had been pressed against them and had left an imprint," Lewis wrote in "Babbitt."

Within months of his arrival, Willes had fired more than two thousand employees and closed the New York City edition of *Newsday* and the evening edition of the Baltimore *Sun*, both money-losers; in his first full year, he cut costs by two hundred and thirty-two million dollars. He killed the national edition of the Los Angeles *Times*, and sold Harry N. Abrams, a publisher of quality art books, because its profit margins were too slim. The New York *Post* dubbed him "the cereal killer," an epithet that pleased Wall Street and helped boost Times Mirror stock from twenty-three dollars a share when Willes arrived to about fifty-five dollars a share last week. "This is how you sell Cheerios," the former General Mills executive kept telling his newspaper executives, to the growing alarm of newsrooms everywhere.

But Willes did achieve his financial goals—brilliantly so—and within the company he began to shift his message. He curbed a tendency to make analogies between newspapers and consumer-product companies. "People reacted strongly and focussed on that rather than on the point I was trying to make," he says. "I tried to find other analogies—power tools! Anything that would work." He began to talk more about rebuilding "trust" within the company, about the Pulitzer Prizes his papers had won, about the obligations a newspaper has. He restored the national edition. He captured the attention of journalists by insisting that he would transform newspapers into a growth industry, one that would hire more reporters. Newspapers were vital, he declared in speeches; they offered "one-stop shopping," perspective, and portability.

Willes did more than preach; in mid-1996, he supported a drop in the price of the *Times* from fifty to twenty-five cents, after which daily circulation began to inch up. He went further, audaciously announcing an "aspiration" to boost the million and fifty thousand copies that the *Times* sells daily by five hundred thousand, seeking "dramatic" rather than "incremental" change—thus the reorganization. He insisted that this was a realistic goal, although during the last six years of Coffey's nine-year tenure, the *Times* had lost daily sales of two hundred thousand newspapers. "If we can grow by fifteen thousand, that would be a great year's work," an executive who knows the company intimately says.

Tonnie Katz, the editor of the Orange County *Register*, which enjoys twice the circulation of the *Times* in the vast region south of Los Angeles, says that the *Times* is perceived as "a paper from outside the county," and, pointing to figures published last week, she notes that "the gap between the *Times* and the *Register* continues to widen." Indeed, in seven of eleven counties where other newspapers compete against the *Times*, the L.A. paper is No. 2. Willes, though, remains messianically optimistic: If only the paper could increase its low, twenty-eight-per-cent penetration in the Los Angeles market, and particularly its small Latino reader base, of nineteen

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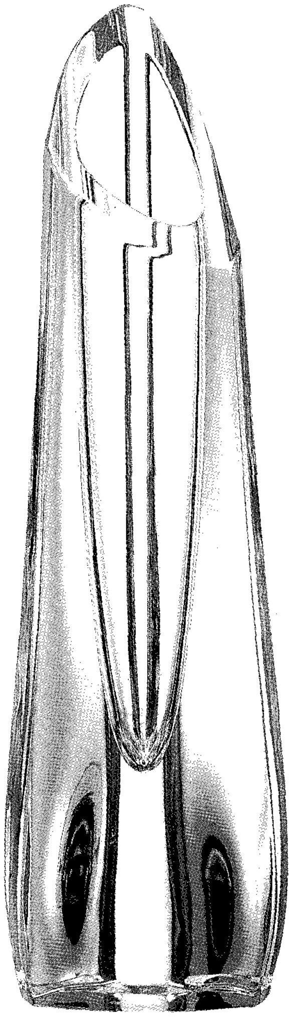

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per cent. Or if it could change the minds of the eight out of ten new daily subscribers who choose not to renew each year. But something else was driving him, Willes told me, a cause that sounded larger than all his arguments about penetration, market share, and renewals: an increasingly segmented marketplace for information means that "we have a responsibility to be the thing that people have in common"—a common database, the glue that provides "a sense of community."

Even as Willes, the chief executive, was making people in the newsroom nervous, he was exciting them by saying that he wanted more and better coverage of downtown Los Angeles. (When Willes tried to create an advertiser-driven section aimed at Latinos, many in the newsroom complained that it would "ghettoize" them.) Often, he could be found chatting with reporters and editors. It galled him, as it did Coffey and other top editors, that the launch of a second weekend Calendar section was stalled for more than a year by internal bureaucratic snags. Willes pushed Richard T. Schlosberg III, the publisher, and the editors "to see if we could learn anything from the workout sessions General Electric"—the parent company of NBC—"has gone through," Janis Heaphy recalls. Schlosberg decided to invite the business seer Peter Drucker to spend a day with him, Willes, Coffey, and half a dozen or so senior editors and business executives.

They met on May 16, 1996, at a Marriott Hotel in Ontario, California, about thirty miles from downtown L.A. Drucker, who was paid a handsome consultant's fee, talked about the history of Western civilization and about American culture and how it was changing; about the evolving role of newspapers; and about the power of marketing. At one point, Michael Parks recalls, Drucker, who is eighty-seven, talked about his grandson, saying that he subscribed to a niche magazine about how to play the trumpet. What the *Times* should do, Drucker said, is think of its various sections—such as sports or Calendar—as niche-magazine products within an over-all brand; the niche targets particular readers, while the paper maintains its broad appeal. Willes perked up at that: "I thought, That's a world I understand." Why not put together teams, not just with one person from the business side but with people from ad sales and circulation and marketing working alongside an editor? "It was a peak day for all of us in how Drucker helped us think differently about our business," Schlosberg recalls.

"Let's get a Drucker process going" became a refrain, and it led to new niches like Monday's Health section. Because Willes had streamlined the company, he was around the flagship paper more. Schlosberg, a former Air Force pilot who served two tours of duty in Vietnam and had been in contention for the C.E.O. job when Willes was picked, was beginning to feel crowded, several of his colleagues say. "Dick was used to his own command," a senior executive observes. Besides, he adds, with the California economy robust again, and with circulation and advertising inching up, Schlosberg felt that he had served his "tour." In September of 1997, the

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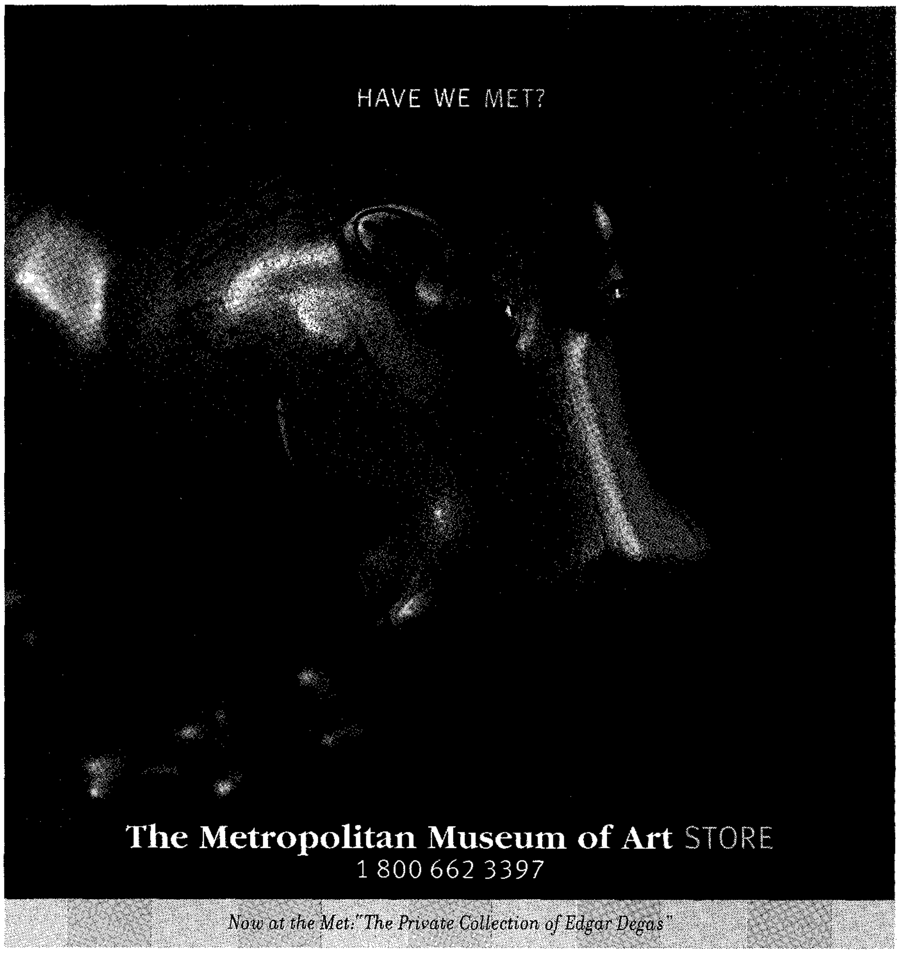
fifty-three-year-old Schlosberg startled the *Times* by announcing his retirement. Schlosberg insists that he admires Willes and enjoyed working with him, but, he says, with his kids grown, "I wanted to have time to have a life."

Willes, as he has done more than once in public, choked back tears when making the announcement. He stunned Schlosberg by taking the publisher's title himself rather than awarding it to someone else. Perhaps no one was more surprised than Shelby Coffey, a neighbor, friend, and fellow marathon runner of Schlosberg's, who told a friend that he had lost "a buffer."

Having worked for three publishers in nine years, Coffey, who is fifty-one, began to question whether he should continue. Coffey does not allow a single negative word about Willes to escape his lips, and presents himself as the good team player. But friends of Coffey say that he was made uneasy by Willes's fervor; by a Christmas party at which Willes invited a choir to sing carols and said that though he knew it was not P.C. to invoke Christ, he would anyway; and by his willingness not only to embrace a cause like educational reform but to pour the paper's resources into it. Coffey was uneasy, a close California friend says, with the fact that "part of Mark's agenda is that he has an agenda. Mark wants to change the world." Indeed, Willes, while not an ideologue, seems to be passionate when it comes to "experimentation." Most newspapers say that they seek the truth and try to help readers "understand the world around them," Willes told me. "We reaffirm those two. But we're also going one step further and saying that the reason for doing those things is to help improve the performance of society. It's not enough to just stand on the side and observe. It's not enough to have your ace reporter say, 'My goodness, look how effectively they're rearranging the chairs on the Titanic,' and write a stimulating series on deck chairs. We think that we've got a responsibility, within appropriate bounds, to help the place work better." To traditionalists, this sounds suspiciously like the reporter as participant rather than as observer.

THE proposed reorganization of the newspaper was a concept that Willes and others had been pushing since the session with Peter Drucker. Coffey and Parks helped draw up the plan, yet



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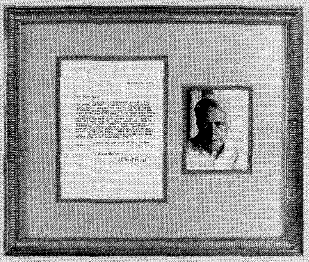
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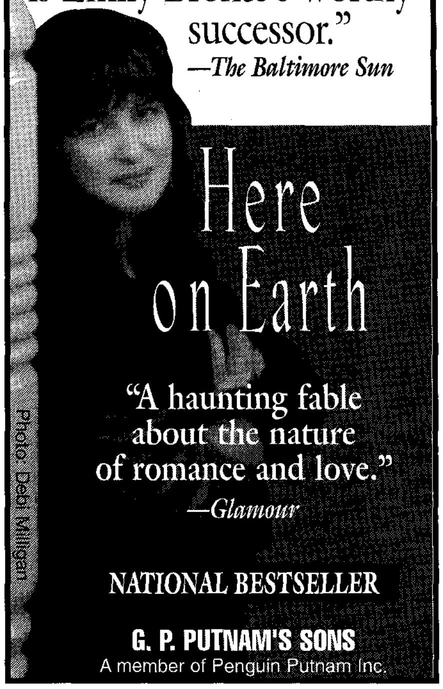

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it became clear, as David Laventhol, Times Mirror's editor-at-large, told me, that Coffey "felt it was not going to work out" with Willes. Laventhol has been a mentor of Coffey's and once served as the president of the parent company.

On October 3rd, Coffey recalls, he lingered after a meeting and told Willes, "I want to give you a gift you might not appreciate immediately but will in time. Every new publisher deserves a chance to choose a new editor."

"O.K., I choose you," Willes replied. They talked back and forth, Coffey saying that he felt it was time to move on and Willes demurring. "I tried very hard to get him to stay," Willes says.

The reorganization announcement came the same day—October 9th—that Coffey's resignation was announced, and in retrospect, Willes says, "the timing turned out to be unfortunate. It raised a question in people's minds: Did he disagree?" A five-page press release heralded "a top-level reorganization" designed "to help the *Times* grow and connect more effectively with readers." Henceforth each editor would have a business partner—a brand manager—working alongside, responsible for galvanizing the entire business side of the team. In response to the frequently asked question of whether or not he was traducing the traditional wall between church and state, Willes says, "I've tried to make a distinction between walls and standards. Walls get in the way of ideas, flexibility, experimentation. If we were ever to lower our journalistic standards, then all these people who criticize us ought to have us shot."

It rankles Willes that his integrity is being questioned. Even if people won't take his word when he talks about his "public trust" obligations, they should believe him, he says, because as a practical businessman he knows that "if we did anything to break that trust" the *Times* would lose its credibility, and thus would lose both readers and advertisers. Willes is backed by the new editor, Michael Parks, a Pulitzer Prize winner who served the *Times* for fifteen years abroad. "There are now fewer questions on this floor than there are in the East Coast media," Parks says.

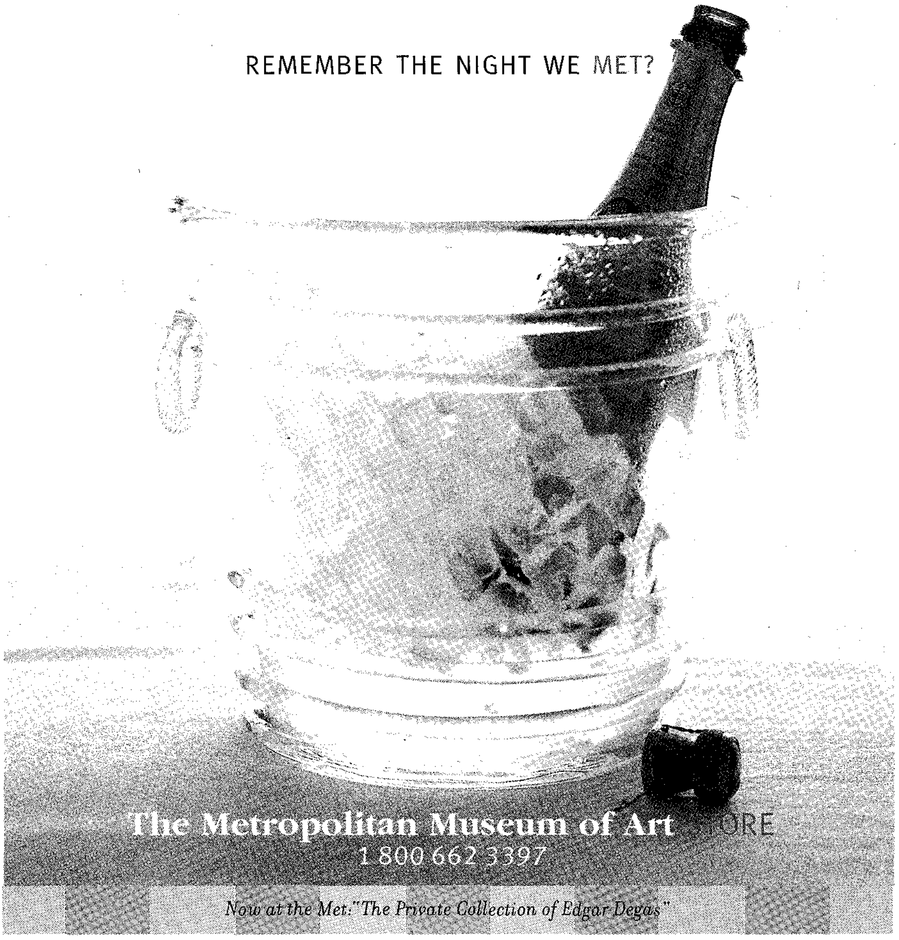
As economists like Willes often say, it's important to disaggregate: an editor would be foolish to design a new section without consulting business counterparts to learn if advertisers will support it, or what timing would be most attractive to advertisers, who provide ninety per cent of the *Times*' billion dollars in revenues. Magazines like *Business Week* and *The New Yorker* have editorial retreats to which they invite select advertisers. The New York *Times* publishes an automobile section that barely disguises its commercial intent. At the annual meeting of the Magazine Publishers Association, in Scottsdale, Arizona, two weeks ago, publishers were beseeched to form "partnerships" with their advertisers, whatever that means.

Yet there is much ambiguity about how Mark Willes's new structure will work: about how conflicts between the section editors and the section general managers will actually be resolved; about how the teamwork culture of business can mesh with the adversarial culture of a newsroom. The *Times* has sold this as a radical restructuring, yet to allay fears it insists that the changes affect only the business side. But even on its face this cannot be so. Donald F. Wright, the president and C.E.O. of the *Times*, for example, thinks that it would be terrific—as does Willes—if reporters recommended to their editors or business "partners" certain advertisers that should be in the paper. There was also confusion about the title—"General Manager, News"—that was given to Jeffrey Klein, who is Parks's business-side counterpart. Why use "news" in his new title, I asked Klein, if he was to be divorced from news? "Interesting question," Klein, a Columbia Journalism School graduate and formerly the paper's First Amendment attorney, replied. "If the title was simply General Manager, without 'news,' it would suggest that I have oversight over every area of the paper. There would be more confusion."

Max Frankel, the former executive editor of the New York *Times*, says that the L.A. paper's restructuring plan dreamily ignores the likelihood of what Janis Heaphy called "human error." Frankel says, "My attitude is always simple: The very top of the hierarchy should talk across the wall to our counterparts. But none of the editors down below, the day-to-day editors, should ever be burdened by commercial considerations." He fears that reporters could come to share the burdens of a money-losing section and begin to think not of readers but of advertisers. "It can't work," Frankel says. "There will be exponential increases in pressures." Benjamin D. Taylor, the publisher of the Boston *Globe*, worries that by lowering the wall the *Times* may create as much confusion on the business side: "If an advertiser has a complaint for our ad-sales person, our ad-sales person has the protection of saying, 'Look, we have a wall. You'll have to complain to the editor.' " Without the wall, ad sales is more vulnerable to pressure.

Editors and reporters are confident that Michael Parks is their "fire wall," and that their fine newspaper, despite its faults, will remain a publication of record. They want Mark Willes to succeed. They like the fact that he champions growth and the virtues of newspapers, that he professed shock and chagrin when he was told of the note the advertising salesperson had sent to the reporter Debora Vrana. Willes tells his reporters that as a former professor he, like them, is used to asking questions. And he, as a former Federal Reserve Bank official, has also, like them, exercised a public trust. "While this is not newspaper experience, it is relevant experience," he told a meeting of his national and overseas staff on September 17th. At the same time, Willes makes colleagues uneasy when, in promoting his thoughts, he seems to cross a line from C.E.O. to evangelist.

Last week, a Times Mirror executive described Willes as "a big believer in data"—a reliance that suggests another flaw in his approach. "It's easy to say that we should not fashion our news coverage to make advertisers feel better or to promote advertisers," Doyle McManus, the *Times*' Washington bureau chief, says. "That one is not hard. Mark Willes understands that. The more extreme issue is that clearly it is both a business necessity and a civic imperative for a great newspaper to increase its circulation. Clearly, an editor must think about marketing. . . . The more difficult, and much more subtle, question when you move to a market-based model of journalism is this: Is there a point where we are eroding, damaging, our core journalistic mission?" In the age of Mark Willes, that remains the question in the anxious newsroom of the *Times*. ♦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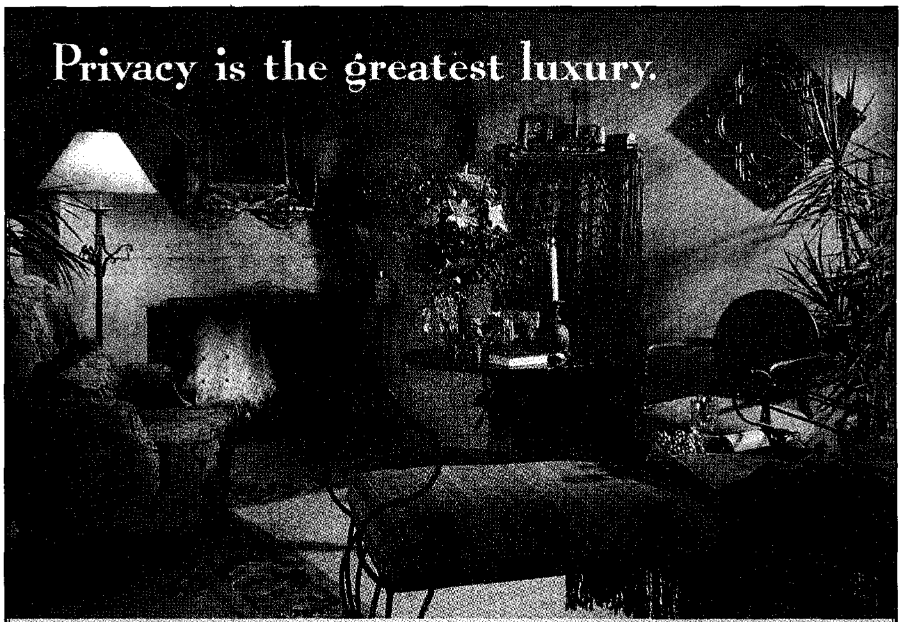

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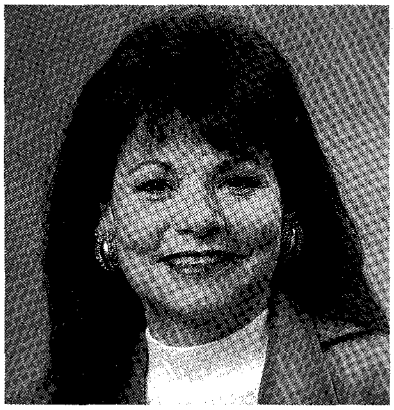

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Why everyone is going to the salsa club across the river.

BY JAY McINERNEY

TWO Latinas with identical corkscrew cascades of hair are tugging at Jimmy's arms, trying to get him to dance, but first he needs to talk to Roberto Ramirez, the chairman of the Bronx Democratic Party. Many people believe that Ramirez could become the first Hispanic mayor of New York; some of these same people will tell you that Jimmy Rodriguez is already the king of the Bronx. Towering above a salsa-maddened mob on the dance floor, a cigarette in one hand and a vodka-cranberry in the other, Jimmy leans down to listen to Ramirez. From across the room, Jimmy might be mistaken for a young James Brolin. His characteristic half smile, framed by a pencil-thin mustache and beard, is both knowing and quizzical; it suggests that he probably knows whatever it is you're about to tell him but that he is nonetheless prepared to be enlightened and amused.

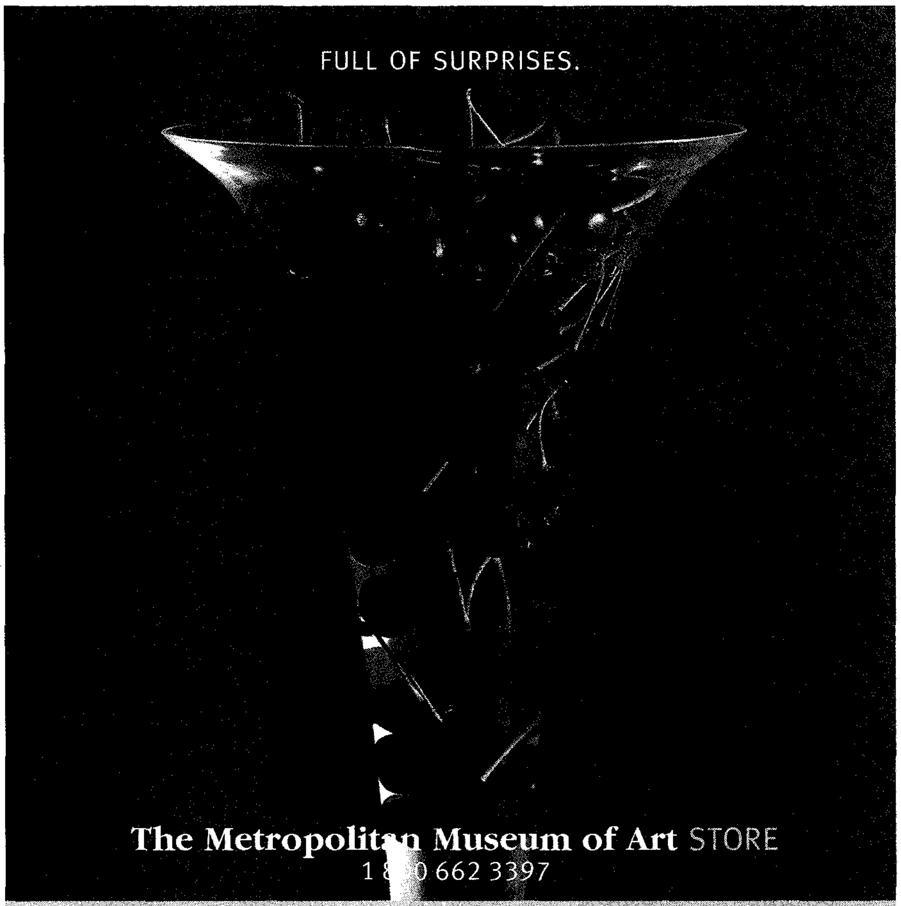
When the band takes a break and the sound system starts playing the merengue hit "Maria Se Fue," by Oro Solido, Jimmy is finally persuaded to dance. Without divesting himself of his cigarette or his drink, he starts dancing with the two young women. Dominican-derived merengue music is often likened to a train that never stops: it's more breathless than Afro-Cuban-derived salsa, which is now more closely identified with Puerto Rico. Like most of his customers, Jimmy dances to both. Merengue dancing is less stylized and intricate than the swing-influenced salsa, and is more overtly sexual. To the uninitiated observer, at least, it's mainly about the hips. Jimmy's remind me of one of those machines they use to mix paint at Home Depot. At a time when retro, languid, living-roomy lounges like Wax Bar, Jet Lounge, and Spy Bar are replacing big dance clubs in downtown Manhattan, the scene at Jimmy's Bronx Café revolves around dancing.

Jimmy Rodriguez has created a Toots Shor's for the nineties. Photograph by Amy Arbus.

On Thursday nights, the club becomes the New York capital of Salsa Nation, a floating party of musicians and dancers that moves among a handful of clubs in the city. Jimmy's patrons, like those of Metropolis, in Queens, or the Latin Quarter, in Manhattan, tend to be second-generation Hispanics who have rediscovered the musical culture of their immigrant parents. Margaret Leon, a Janet Jackson look-alike, is dancing with Jimmy. Her father is from Ecuador, her mother from Puerto Rico. She used to hate the music they listened to. "It was such an uncool scene, salsa and merengue," she says. "I used to go to all the trendy places in Manhattan. Then, a few years ago, I started coming to places like Jimmy's, and it was hot. It was like coming home." A secretary for a midtown ad agency, Margaret considers English her first language, but lately she has come to prefer salsa to alt rock. "I don't know, it's like in your blood," she says. Her friend Janneth Giron agrees: "We're all coming back."

There are also gringos—and gringas—who are discovering the beat for the first time, like a poodle-haired blonde named Greta Ratjen, who is a teacher at P.S. 41, in the Bronx. When the salsa band reclaims the stage, Greta and two other women get up to dance with Cisco Rivera, who appears to be some kind of mad, stocky, salsa Astaire, spinning and dipping his partners like a yo-yo champ with three arms, turning and gliding on wild, snaky legs—the whole intricate orbital system held together by the hips. "That's dancing," Jimmy says, lighting another smoke as he waves to Maggie Ramos, a singer with the salsa band Isidro Infante, who is wearing a breath-defyingly tight black velvet dress accented with rhinestones. The aesthetic here and at the other new Latino clubs is flashier and dressier than at downtown Manhattan spots. You won't see jeans or sneakers, matte fabrics, sweats, or chunky boots. This ain't no Mudd Club. The women wear spike heels, and the men wear suits, the sources of which range from Versace to Sears. Almost everybody has to work tomorrow morning—Maggie works at the baby counter at Tiffany's—but it's 3 A.M. and they're still dancing.

On any given evening, the crowd at Jimmy's Bronx Café may include such locals as Tito Puente, John Leguizamo, the actress Jennifer Lopez, Sean (Puffy) Combs, and Bronx Borough President Fernando Ferrer, as well as the occasional Manhattan scenester such as the *Post's* Richard Johnson and the party designer Robert Isabell. Like Toots Shor's in the fifties, Jimmy's mix includes politicians, musicians, and athletes (as opposed to the prescription SoHo cocktail of models, rockers, artists, and actors). Tonight, the urbane Ferrer is having dinner in the club's restaurant, with a group that includes Jimmy and Roberto Ramirez. "Before Jimmy came along, there was no place for this com-



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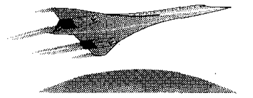

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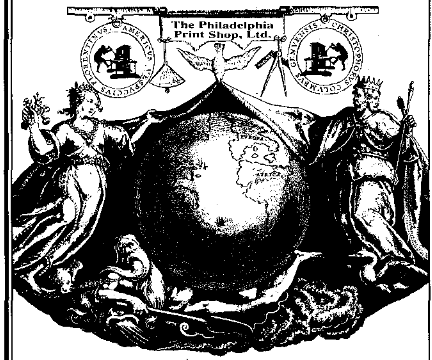
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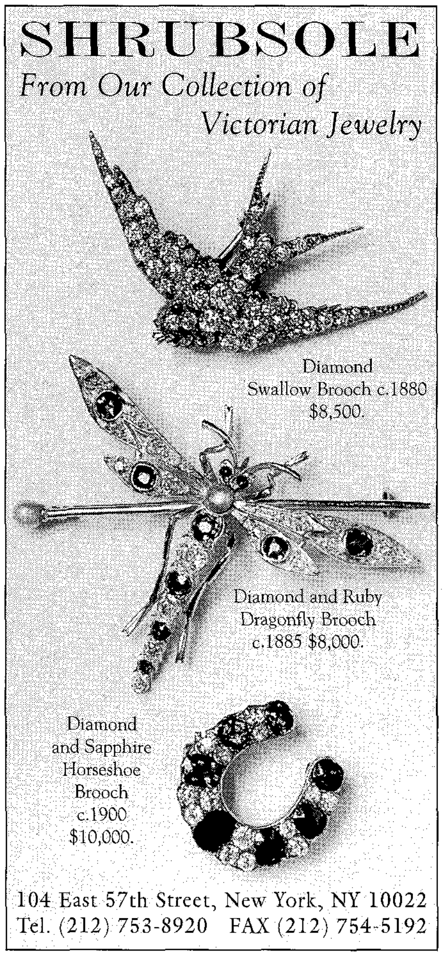
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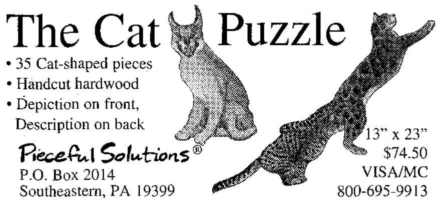
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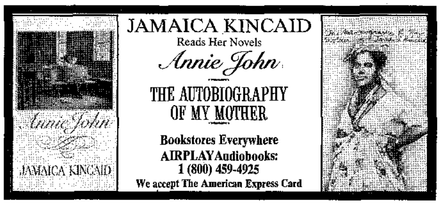
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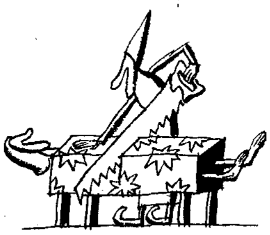
munity to gather," Ramirez says. Ferrer adds that New York's Latino population will easily surpass thirty per cent in the next census. It remains to be seen whether Anglo New York will start dancing to a salsa beat—or, to put it another way, whether Latino music, culture, and fashion can become hip for the first time since the big-band Ricky Ricardo era of the fifties. However, the moment seems propitious.

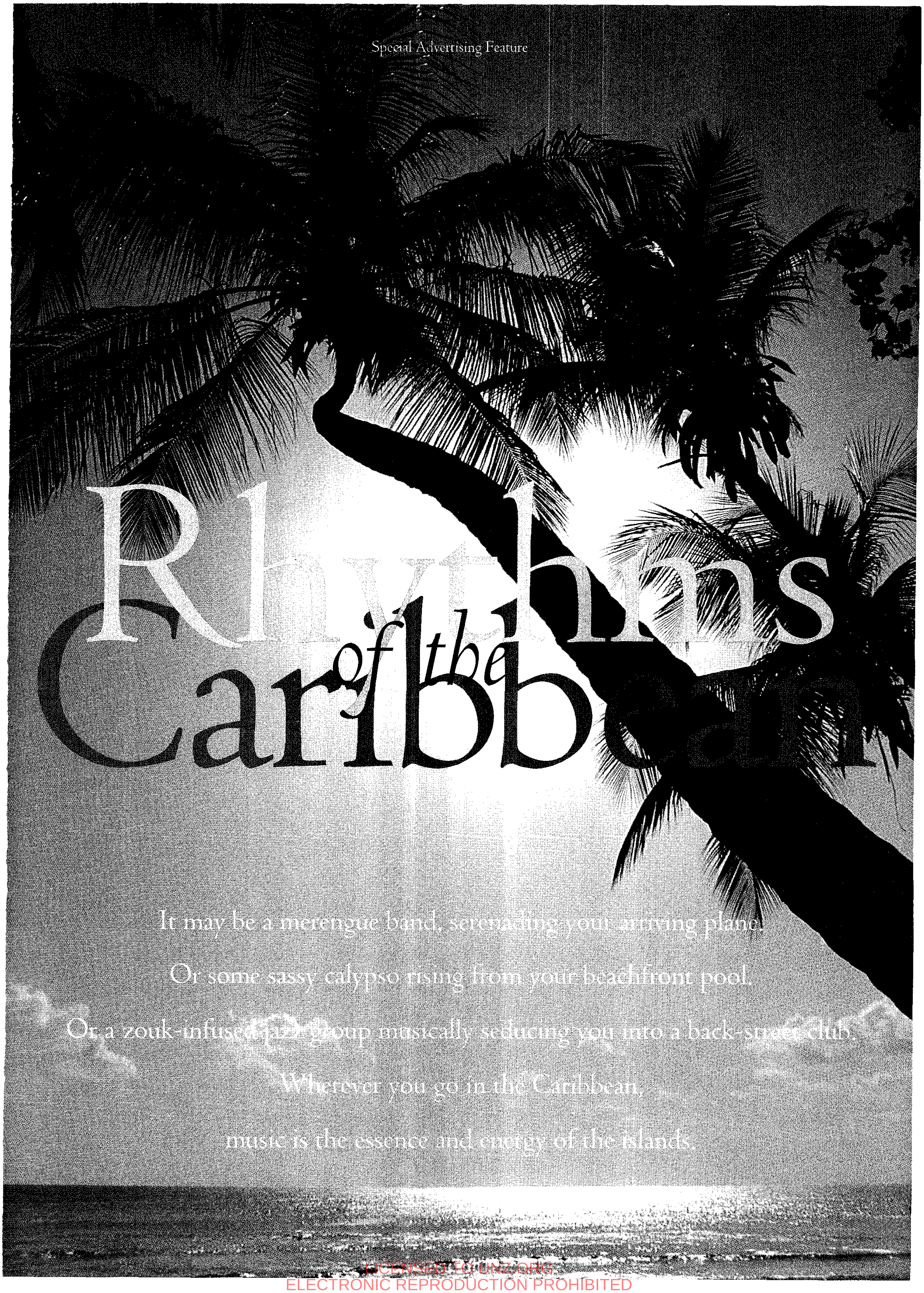


Many of Manhattan's night crawlers complain that there has been nothing new under the moon since the mid-eighties. Downtown night life appears to have fractured into various ghettos, representing narrow constituencies of musical, sexual, and pharmacological taste. Thanks to the city's tough cabaret laws, new clubs, if they open at all, tend to spring up in old spaces, leading to a sense of déjà vu or just plain boredom in those who were around in the eighties. If "bridge and tunnel" has long been the ultimate put-down in fashionable New York, it's useful to remember that whatever is uncool eventually becomes cool. (Disco, anyone?) Meanwhile, the Studio 54 co-founder Ian Schrager recently showed up at Jimmy's to check out the action and stayed late to dance with his wife, Rita Norona, though he was initially denied admission because his bluejeans flunked the Saturday-night dress code. Only Jimmy's eventual intercession saved Schrager from the fate that so many bridge-and-tunnel migrants once suffered outside the ropes of Studio.

With walls of glass on three sides, one of which faces the Harlem River and Manhattan, Jimmy's club resembles a giant Florida room, all green, lavender, and white, with webbed chairs and brass rails. But it doesn't take much imagination to conjure the showroom for the Oldsmobile dealership that used to occupy the premises. Jimmy Rodriguez grew up in an apartment directly across the street, on Fordham Road. (He was born in 1962, the eldest of three sons of Puerto Rican immigrants.) Looking out the window at the shiny new cars, he says now, gave him his first vision of the good life. By the time he was sixteen, he was buying and selling used cars, clearing as much as two thousand dollars a week. Fifteen years later, he bought the building that had inspired his earliest entrepreneurial dreams and opened Jimmy's Bronx Café.

IT'S Hispanic Heritage Day at Yankee Stadium, and Jimmy is uncharacteristically perturbed. In fact, he's pissed. He has donated food from his restaurant for two hundred Hispanic students who are guests of the Yankees for the evening. "Seven sponsors for this damn event, and all they can do is two hundred kids? I sponsor thirty-five Little League teams, and I could have turned out more than that myself." Jimmy strides past the ticket-takers with a shoulder-rolling gait that has something of the boxer loosening up just before the fight. He slaps the outstretched hand of a security guard and slips through the gate, shaking hands along the way.

Inside the stadium, he attracts far more attention than the former Yankee Joe Pepitone, to whom he introduces himself. Jimmy is a big fan, but that doesn't prevent him from remarking, sotto voce, in reference to Pepitone's Roman-centurion-style do, "He better watch out for the wind." When the Yankees play at home, the food they eat after the game often comes from Jimmy's, and many of them are regulars at his establishment. This is all very gratifying to a kid who grew up in the Bronx watching the Yankees play. Although Jimmy says he never doubted that he would be a success, he still seems to take a childlike delight in finding that he has become one. "I always wanted to be No. 1," he says. "I wanted to be the best dancer, the best everything. One of my first jobs, I was a dishwasher at Soup Burg, in Manhattan, and I was the best damn dishwasher you ever saw. They made me a delivery boy, and nobody ever delivered faster than me." His early entry into the working world was prompted in part by his father's departure from the family when Jimmy was eleven. After he started dealing used cars, he dropped out of the tenth grade and reunited with his father. Together, they sold lobsters at the Webster Avenue underpass, gradually diversified into fish and shrimp, and took a lease on a building across the street. "We covered the rent by subletting two-thirds of the building," Jimmy recalls, "and, next thing, we built a wooden counter and started a little restaurant



Rhythms of the Caribbean

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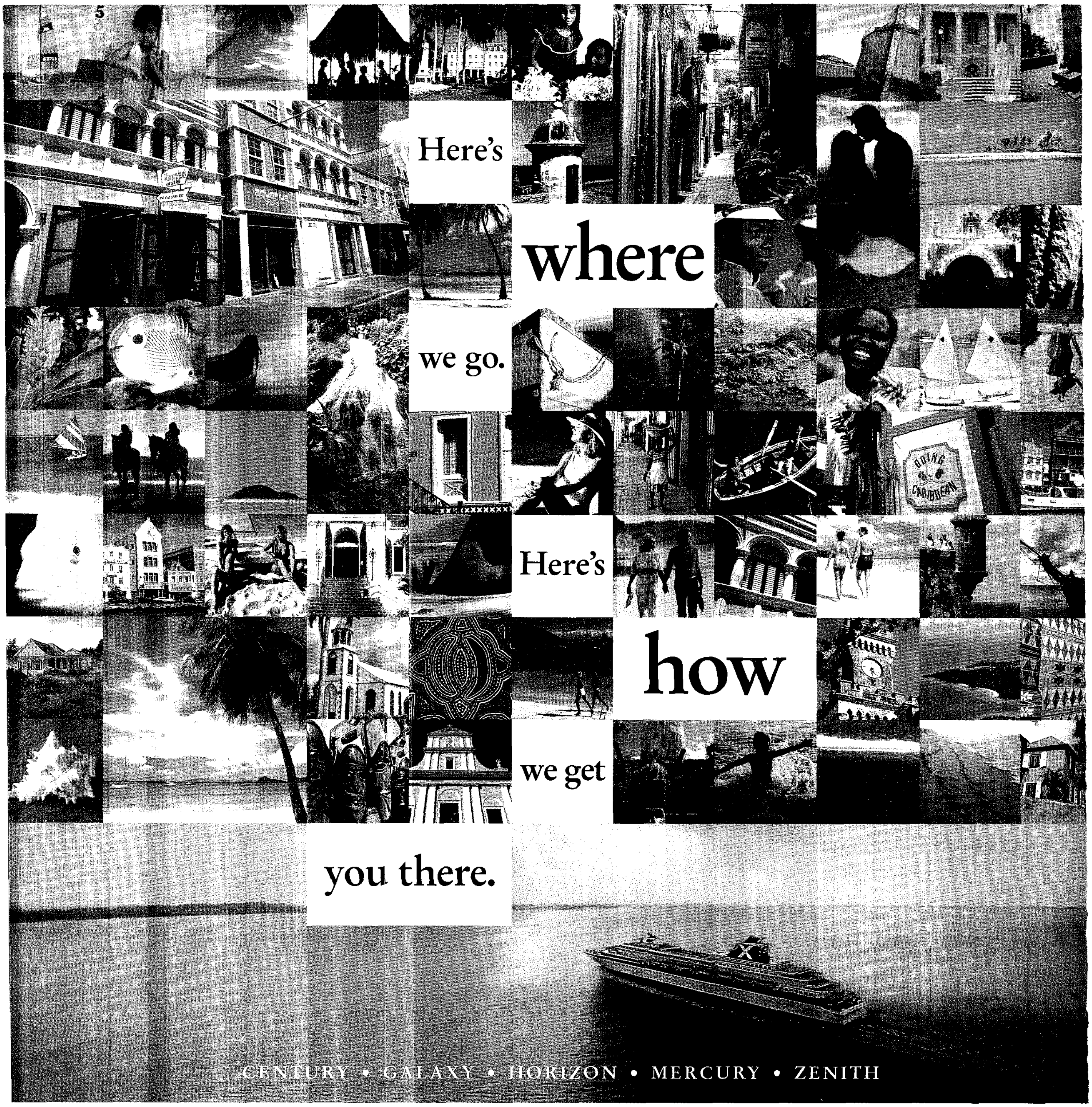

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Folkloric Festival in Ponce

Some of the rhythms go back centuries to Africa, Europe, and India. Time and talent have worked their magic on these sounds and today, Caribbean music is as varied and complex as the cultures that have fostered it. Even as the music evolves, ancient times and rhythms are being rescued from extinction, and you can hear them from Nassau to Port of Spain in Trinidad, in parades and festivals, in nightclubs and hotel lounges.

by David Butwin

Music follows you everywhere in Puerto Rico. Day and night, salsa, merengue, and other rhythms pour from taxis, fruit stands, open-air counters called *kioscos*, nightclubs, and even the downtown ballpark. Grab a taxi to the San Juan Chateau in the Hato Rey section near the vast shopping center, Plaza las Americas. Top salsa groups like Sonora Ponceña and a newer group led by Domingo Quinoñez rock the club weekly.

Merengue, a lively import from the Dominican Republic, is starting to give salsa some serious competition. You hear it from juke boxes and in clubs and at concerts. And some of the best merengue is being done by Olga Tañon. Look for a Fiesta Patronal. Saint's day festivals like these run for several days eventually taking over the main plaza of each of seventy-six towns and villages with salsa, merengue, and ballads.

Puerto Rico celebrates the Christmas season from the day after Thanksgiving to January 6th, Epiphany Day. One of the typical sounds of the season is the insistent thrum of the little tambora drum beating out another plena ballad. A short narrative song with sharp satire, *plena* has its roots in Africa. It was brought from there to Ponce, on the south coast of Puerto Rico, and has spread all over the island. If you catch a Winter League baseball game at Hiram Bithorn Stadium between local rivals the San Juan Senators and the Santurce Crabbers, you'll see, seated in the stands, a five-member group of *pleneiros* (plena drummers) beating out a rally tune.

International pop star Ednita Nazario sings the national anthem at the big games. This season she's been in New York rehearsing for Paul Simon's Broadway musical, "The Capeman," due to open in January with Rubén Blades and salsa star Marc Anthony. Earlier this year, in a powerful performance at the Lincoln Center Festival, Nazario belted out a medley of the plena. She brings to Latin pop music her devotion to her cultural roots while allowing herself to be freely influenced by other genres.

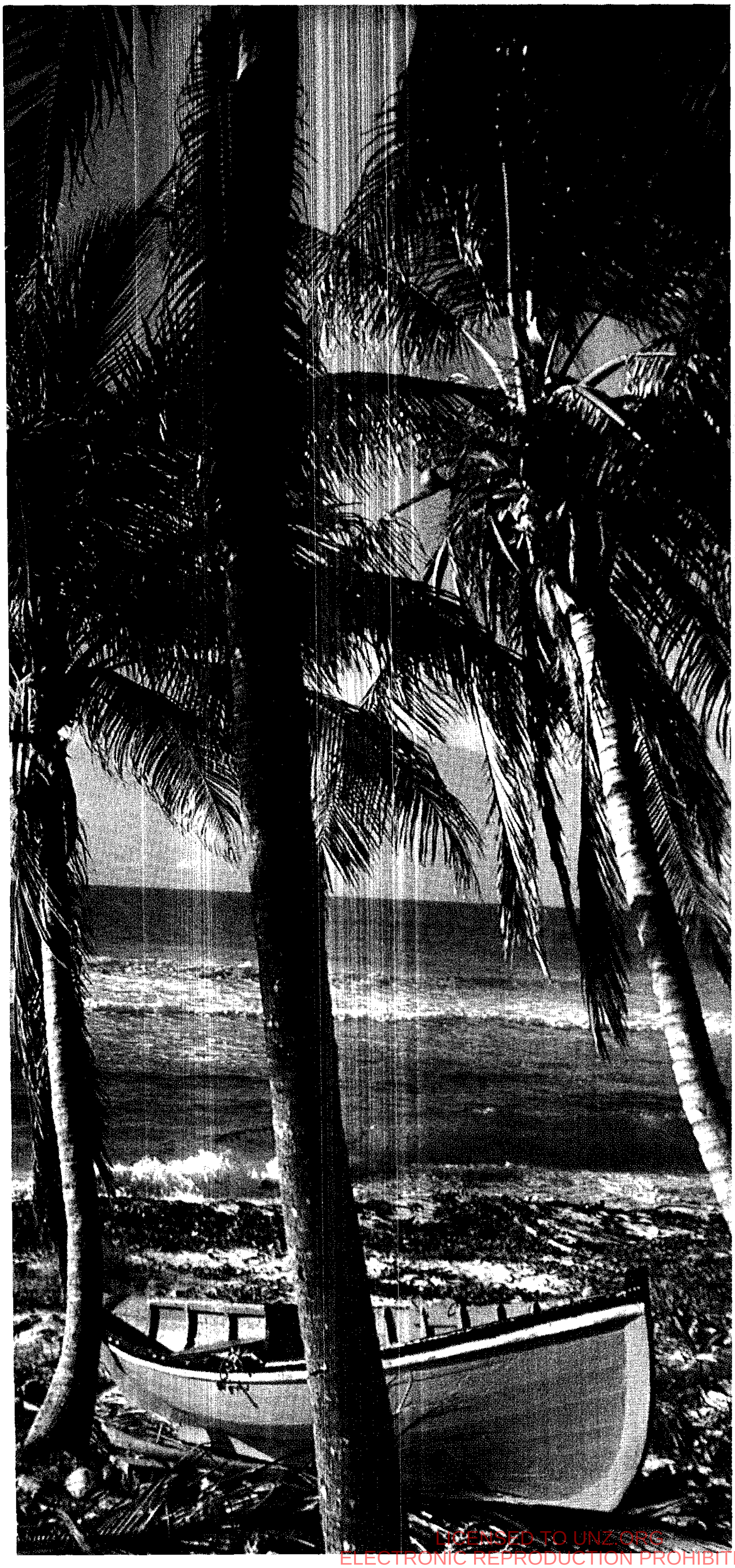
The Cayman Islands

Savvy visitors know there is more to the The Cayman Islands than exploring spectacular reefs or strolling the nonpareil Seven Mile Beach on Grand Cayman. Music is the main staple, and it's a strange and wonderful amalgam of Caribbean calypso, soca, reggae, American pop, and country western. (Generations of Caymanian men went to sea with the American merchant marines and were influenced by southern U.S. country radio stations.)

On Grand Cayman, you might catch a concert featuring Charley Pride or the Gatlin Brothers, some Jamaican reggae stars, or calypso kings from Barbados and Trinidad. At day's end, kick back and relax in a seaside bar like the Crow's Nest, the Blue Parrot, the Seaview, or Hog Sty Bay. Watch the sun sizzle down red and hot over the Caribbean, and get ready for local bands to light up the night. A growing legend in Cayman entertainment circles is George Nowak, the Barefoot Man, who performs poolside under the palms at the Holiday Inn Wednesday through Saturday nights. This shoeless troubador had to take his act outdoors a few years ago when the hotel's lounge proved too small for his growing legions of admirers.

Another island fixture, Earl La Pierre, fills the lobby of Treasure Island Resort every night but Sunday with his cool solo steel pan sounds. Known as "the maestro," he also plays outdoors at the Grand Cayman Marriott Beach Resort alternating with the duo Heat. You can find cassettes and CDs by La Pierre, the Barefoot Man, and other Cayman artists like Darrel Dacres and Nina Orrett, at island record shops such as Funky Tang's on Shedden Road, the Music Factory nearby, Hot Tracks in the West Shore Shopping Centre, or the lobby shops of most major hotels.

When your feet start to dance, the place to go is the Planet Nite Club and Sports Bar, which has the largest dance floor on Grand Cayman. Weekends, the Planet stages huge parties, and top d.j.'s, local bands, and visiting artists fill the air with rock, calypso, salsa, punta, and reggae.



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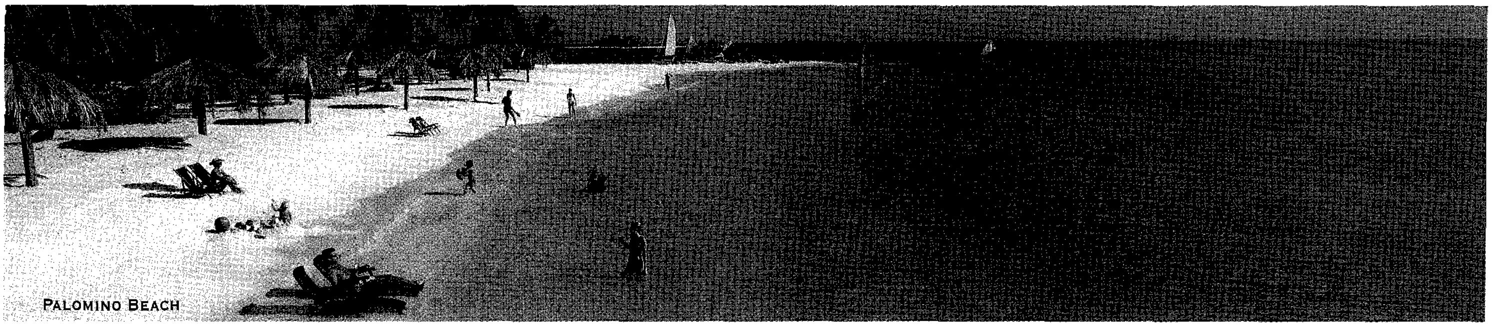
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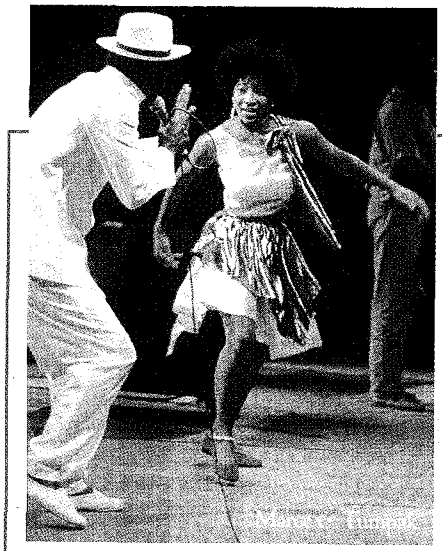

Marcé & Tumpak

Barbados

There is always something new in Caribbean music, and in Barbados these days it's ring-bang, a drum-dictated variation on calypso. Eddy Grant, a prominent calypsonian turned mega-producer, introduced ring-bang to the world on several compilation albums of carnival music. Songs by new artists like Viking-Tundah were featured as well as calypso legend The Mighty Gabby. Gabby, a prolific songwriter, came to prominence in the nineteen-eighties with a folk hit, "Emmerton," that told the story of his own tough beginnings. Gabby and Red Plastic Bag are a pair of calypsonian talents who compete for the top spots in the annual Crop Over festival. They also perform locally, moving from club to club along with hot young bands like Edwin Yearwood's Krosfyah (the number one Bajan group today) and Square One.

Much of the action is centered on the south end of the island in St. Lawrence Gap, a ten-minute drive from Bridgetown. In one cluster are the Ship Inn, with its pulsing indoor and outdoor bars, the dark and cavernous Reggae Club, and After Dark, which has a laid-back outdoor lounge with live bands. (The latter also features an indoor bar that stretches seventy-five feet, making it by far the longest bar in Barbados and certainly one of the best-stocked.) In Bridgetown, the breezy Boat Yard on Bay Street is a warren of bars that open onto the water, encouraging patrons to take their drinks out onto the sand.

French West Indies

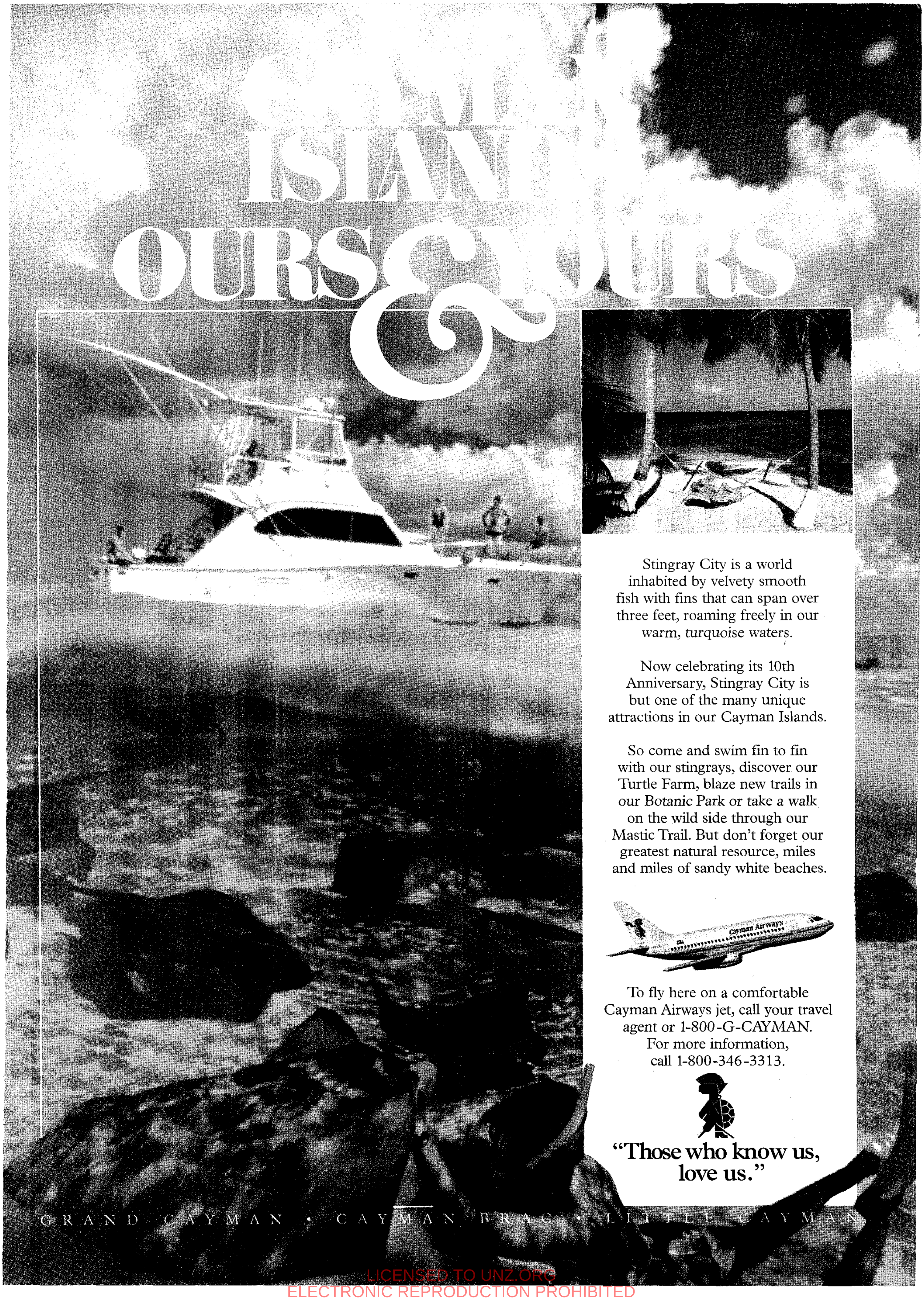
The musical evolution of the French West Indies may have begun with the beguine, but it continues with *zouk*, the hybrid found in Martinique and Guadeloupe today. Zouk, sung exclusively in Creole, embellishes its French-Caribbean rhythms with diverse musical genres from around the world. Zouk means "party" in Creole, and it's a party you'll have when groups like Kassav, Taxi Krol, and Marcé & Tumpak start to rattle and roll at various "Fêtes Patronales" (Patron Saint Festivals) across the islands. You won't be able merely to listen to these free-wheeling concerts, you'll want to bounce up and dance.

Martinique tambu dancer

Marcé & Tumpak, a group of ten astounding dancers and musicians, have made acclaimed appearances in New York and New Orleans. They specialize in an exciting musical style called *chouval bwa* ("wooden horse" in Creole) that used to accompany the wooden merry-go-rounds popularized by French colonists. In its rural form, the music has an unusually percussive vocal style, with homemade instruments and melodies played on bamboo flutes or kazoos. Marcé & Tumpak update this folk genre with electric instruments in a modified style that Marcé calls *zouk chouv*. Another group making big sounds for many years is Malavoi, which beats out mazurkas, beguines, zouk, rumbas, and Creole waltzes. Veteran singer, composer, percussionist, and flutist, Dédé

Photos clockwise from top: courtesy of Martinique Promotion

Dominican merengue dancer



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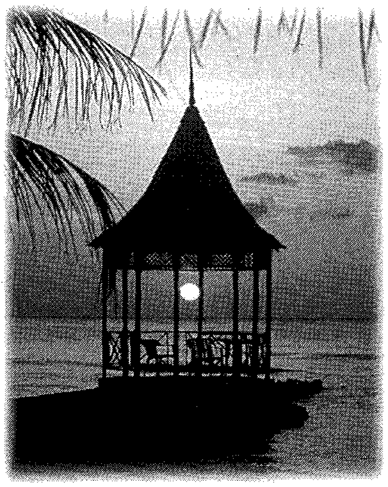

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Saint-Prix plays a vast range from traditional to modern, while weaving in elements of poetry and storytelling in the African "griot" tradition. At his concerts, he invariably commands his listeners to "get up and dance."

For a winning night of music on Martinique, the friendly little Cotton Club on the beach in Anse Mitan features live jazz and beguine. Le Queen's, in the Hôtel La Batelière, draws a chic crowd, especially when the legendary group La Perfecta is in-house playing a combination of new zouk songs and reworkings of its hits from the seventies. On Guadeloupe, two stylish clubs are La Plantation on Basse-Terre and Le Shiva in Le Moule on the Atlantic coast of Grande-Terre.

Nassau's Junkanoo

Twin Peaks à la St. Lucia

Dominica

Green and mountainous Dominica, halfway between Guadeloupe and Martinique, is loved by bird-watchers, mountain hikers, and increasingly by music fans. No less than seven bands are active, playing calypso, soca, a local rhythm called *bouyon*, R. & B., cadence, and zouk. WCK, First Serenade, Partners in Crime, Ruff and Ready, EFEX, R.S.B., and Midnight Grovers can be heard at nightclubs and on the radio. Dominicans speak (and sing) in Creole patois, and this year the island recently hosted the first-ever World Creole Music Festival as a celebration of its language.

St. Lucia

Under its lofty twin Piton peaks, St. Lucia swings to jazz with a West Indian beat that has few peers in the Caribbean. For four days in May, the island celebrates the St. Lucia Jazz Festival, an internationally touted fest. Island musicians like Boo Hinkson and Luther Francois of Francois and Friends can be heard on St. Lucia, but the demand for their sounds is such that they also regularly perform in Martinique. Other leading groups are Sugar Cane, Third Eye, October 4, Apex, and Future Lights. At the chic little Anse Chastanet, a tree house of a hotel, Julius Alfred and his venerable *shak-shak* quartet composed of violin, banjo, guitar, and shak-shak rattle (made from the monkey pod tree) play jazz with quadrille rhythms similar to those found in rural Louisiana.

Every Friday night, the north coast town of Gros Islet erupts with an outdoor dance party called Jump Up. Musicians and bands set up in the main street with its wrought-iron reminders of Bourbon Street in New Orleans. A happy mix of islanders and tourists from the north end hotels dance and party until three in the morning and later.

The Islands Of The Bahamas

If you find yourself in The Islands Of The Bahamas on Boxing Day (December 26th) or New Year's morning, you'll experience Junkanoo. Small Junkanoo bands can be found throughout the 700-island chain, but in Nassau and Freeport the Junkanoo Festival turns both holidays into nonstop outdoor celebrations. Nassau's Bay Street is blocked off, and thousands

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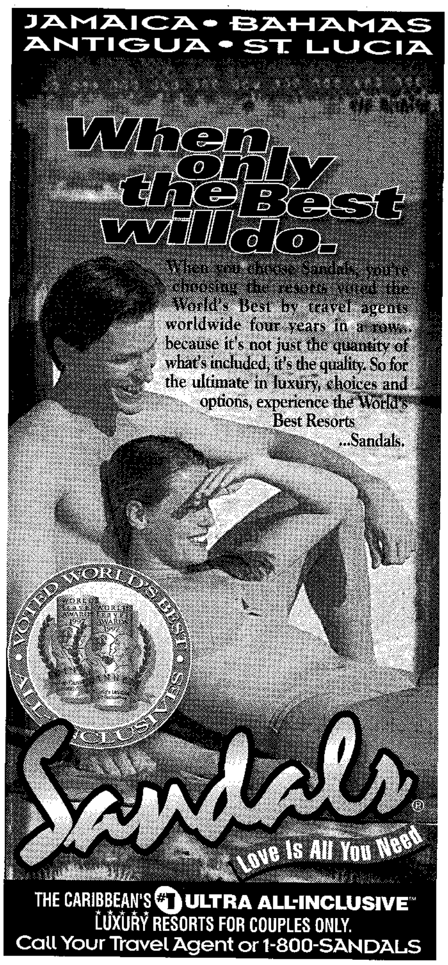
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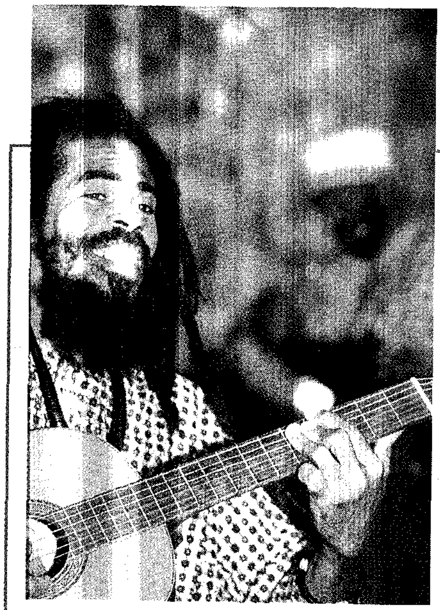

St. John guitarist © Bob Coates

of music makers convulse in a feverish outpouring of this peculiarly Bahamian celebration. In its African form, goatskin drums, cowbells, and horns were featured; now bass and other orchestral instruments have been added. Junkanoo revelers, sometimes in groups that are 300 or 400 strong, fill the streets and strut their stuff, playing and dancing their hearts out, aiming for prizes. You'll hear The Valley Boys, The Vikings, One Family, The Fancy Dancers, Roots, and The Saxons, among others.

Of course you can sample Junkanoo any day or night of the year in the clubs and hotels of Nassau, Paradise Island, Freeport, and The Out Islands.

Trinidad & Tobago

To the musical stew that makes Trinidad & Tobago simmer year-round with calypso, soca, and steel band (or pan), must be added a dollop of *chutney*, the latest and hottest form of party music in these polyglot islands. Chutney uses East Indian folk songs, movie tunes, and even *bhajan* (religious songs) on top of a fast calypso or soca-based beat. The top chutney singers on the scene—Sundar Popo, Anand Yankaran and the Queen, and Ramrajee Prabhoo—perform on their own or with major calypsonians.

Calypso, soca, and steel bands still make the two islands hop, and the beat picks up as the two-day bacchanal called Carnival approaches. Super Blue and David Rudder (sometimes called the Bob Marley of calypso) have come to prominence in recent years.

Trinidad and the steel drum are one. There are fierce pan competitions all year long, none more so than the national Panorama, a Carnival fixture. More than one hundred registered bands compete. For a preview of the art, visit a Port of Spain panyard, where musicians store their instruments and rehearse their rhythms.

On Tobago, as rural as Trinidad is lively and urban, an award-winning choir called Tourism Adventures has been making waves for ten years. Thirty-five strong and backed by guitar, drum, shak-shak, and bass, Tourism Adventures serves up gospel, contemporary, folk, and calypso to churches, weddings, and festivals. Catch their very moving act at the Coco Reef Resort on Saturday nights, the Grafton Beach Resort on Sundays.

St. Vincent & the Grenadines

In St. Vincent and the gentle sweep of islands called the Grenadines, you may not get a chance to see the popular balladeer known as The Beckett (he plays the U.S. most of the year) but you are bound to hear this native son's catchy calypso rhythms and his hit "Teaser" on the local airwaves. Meanwhile, in Kingstown, St. Vincent, there is live and d.j. music at a jumping little joint, the Attic. And out near the villas and hotels, nightspot the Aquatic Club favors a blend of calypso and R. & B. with bands like Touch and Black Sand.

North of here, on Antigua and Barbuda—islands as noted as the Grenadines for superior sailing conditions and traditional rhythms—the steel band is alive and jangling. Check out the Burning Flames, L.A. Crew, Onyan, and Dread & the Baldhead.

British Virgin Islands

Fungi (fun-gee) music, one of the last links to African culture in the British Virgin Islands, is alive and well in this lovely scatter of green isles. To folks here, fungi also means a "cook-up," which is a mix of cornmeal boiled up with okra and served with steamed fish (as in "Fish and Fungi" a local delicacy). As a musical form, it's a melodic concoction of string, percussion, and wind, and it often has a vocal section. From the days of slavery, fungi rhythms were cooked up by the village men when they got together and jammed, or when they performed for holidays and festivals, or just for fun. But with the influx of tourists in the sixties, the hotels needed entertainment and a profession was born.

No doubt the hottest of BVI fungi bands are the Lashing Dogs, who play an upbeat and modernized fungi while weaving history and culture into their riveting lyrics. The group is loved here and abroad for their ability to connect with their audiences. When the Lashing Dogs aren't on tour or hired out for private parties, you can catch them at pubs such as Quito's in the village of Cane Garden Bay on the north side of Tortola. Other local fungi bands making noise and musical history are the Spark Plugs, High Voltage, Leon & the Hot Shots, Serenaders, Romeo & the Injectors, and the Lover Boys.

Steel pan music, on the wane in the British Virgin Islands a decade ago, is riding a comeback

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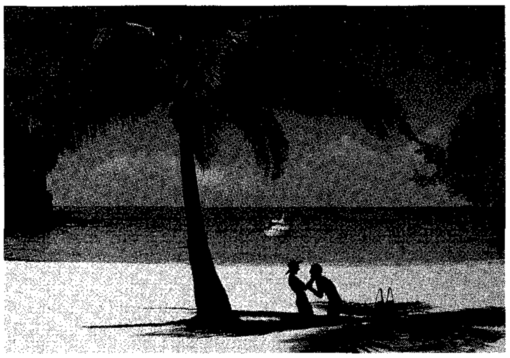

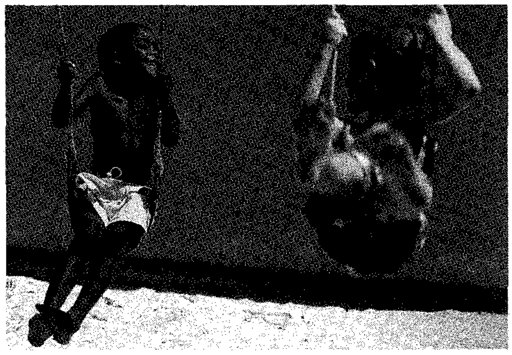

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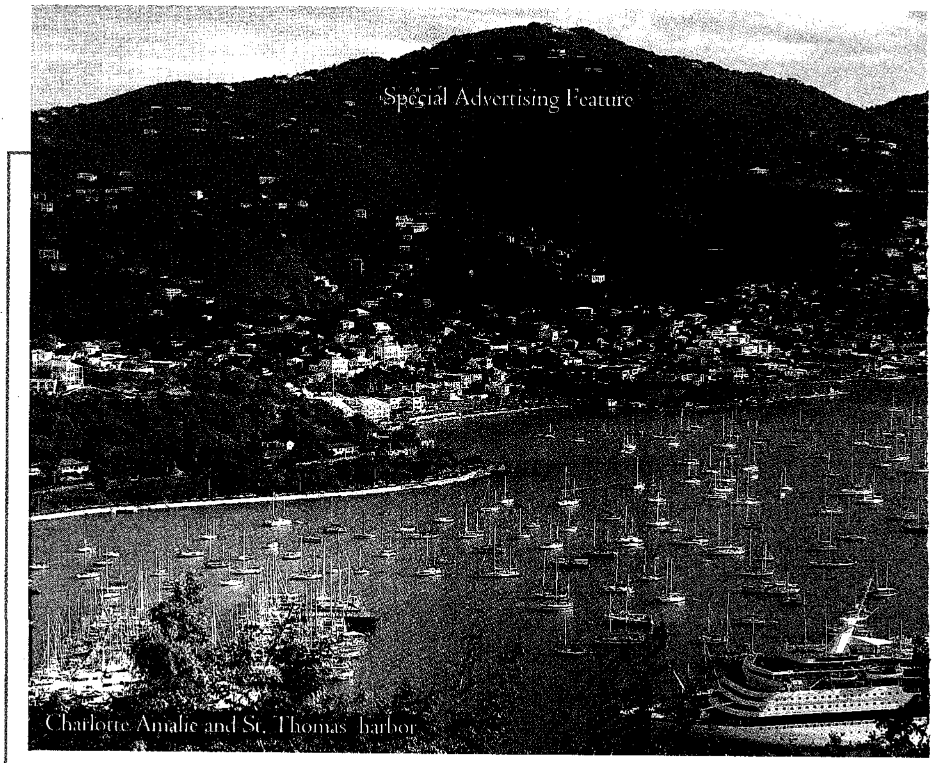

Charlotte Amalie and St. Thomas harbor

wave thanks to the steely initiative of Leslie DeCastro. His Music in Steel Association set out to revive both steel bands and fungi and scratch bands, bringing instructors up from Trinidad to teach a new generation the steel pan. A profusion of church bands, school bands, and gig bands has resulted. Two of the best bands to arrive on the BVI scene are the Shooting Stars Steel Orchestra and the well-traveled Pan Vibes. Another very active group, Norbert Donovan and his Steel Pan Band, can be heard in Tortola nightspots several times a week.

United States Virgin Islands

If it's fungi in the British Virgin Islands, it's quelbe in the United States Virgin Islands. A valiant and successful effort has restored *quelbe* (kwell'-bay), a scratch-band style that arose in the plantations especially on St. Croix. This fusion of African and European rhythms is a sort of slowed-down calypso, with lyrics composed of biting social commentary. It uses instruments such as flute, tambourine, a steel triangle, homemade drums, and a tail-pipe (literally the discarded exhaust pipe from an old car). Stanley and the Ten Sleepless Knights, the hot quelbe group in St. Croix, are also turning up in the other U.S. Virgin Islands. Blinky and the Roadmasters and Jamesie and the Happy Seven also play local dances, festivals, and nightclubs. Two rising quelbe groups are Native Rhythm and Bully and the Kafooners.

Carnival in St. Thomas

On St. Thomas, Duffy's Love Shack spills out into a large parking lot after closing, playing reggae, rock, and Jimmy Buffett, for a lively crowd of islanders and locals. At the Green House, a bar and restaurant in Charlotte Amalie, Wednesday is the big night, when the Starlites play an assortment of reggae, calypso, and R. & B. On green and hilly St. John, a bar and grill called Skinny Legs near Coral Bay features a mix of country and R. & B. with a West Indian beat on Saturday nights. And Fred's, in Cruz Bay, shakes with a local band doing calypso and reggae.

St. Croix's Blue Moon is a coffee house, bistro, and jazz club in a landmark house on the Frederiksted waterfront. It swings to a Crucian beat when the band Rhythm X plays on Fridays. Indies, another historic venue with live jazz on most Saturday nights, occupies a handsome stone house in downtown Christiansted with an eighteenth-century courtyard overflowing with exotic flora.

Photos: top, FPG International © Eberhard Otto; middle, USVI's Echo People; and below, © Bob Coates.

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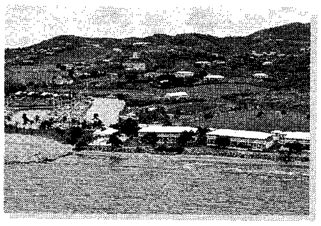

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Jamaica

Jamaica pulsates with music from the Mandeville highlands to the shores of Negril, and it all starts with reggae. With its raw drums and bass and its uncompromising lyrics, reggae came out of the Jamaica ghettos a generation ago on the wings of Bob Marley. You hear it today in the rum shops and reggae bars, or pouring from taxis and buses, and if you tune in IRIE-FM, the nonstop reggae station. IRIE is more than a series of call letters, it is a staple of Jamaican conversation—an expression of well-being, as in "Everything's fine."

Sunsplash in Ocho Rios

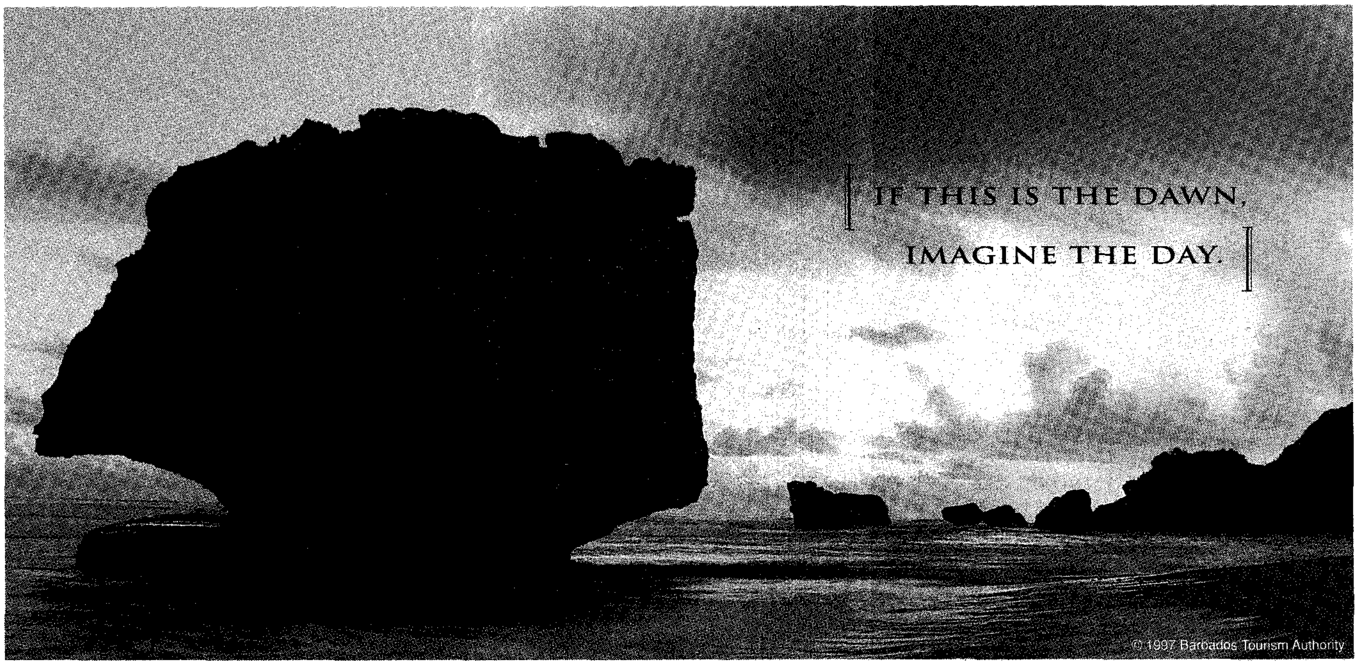
Reggae was discouraged on the airwaves before IRIE broke through. "From the first test," says producer Steven Stewart in a recent *Billboard* magazine interview, "the taxi operators who commute from Ocho Rios to Kingston tuned in and soon everybody in Kingston knew about us. From that point on, the whole country played IRIE-FM. Some execs worried that we wouldn't have enough quality music to keep a twenty-four hour reggae format," says Stewart. "But Jamaicans have been recording reggae music since the nineteen-fifties, and it puts out the most music (per capita) in the world."

Negril, the sandy and laid-back resort district that stretches along seven miles of gorgeous beach, is something of a reggae hotbed. Two lively beachfront spots, Alfred's Ocean Palace and De Buss, are famous across the island for their dances—spontaneous reggae-driven affairs with live or taped music powered by huge speakers. If the mood moves onlookers to dance, they do, otherwise they hang out with a Red Stripe beer or rum punch and let the sounds carry the night.

Out in Port Antonio, a zesty reggae joint, the Roof Club, attracts a healthy mix of tourists and residents. For a mellower scene, try the Blue Lagoon, where you can hear jazz with reggae and soca strains on a large deck perched over the luminous lagoon. If you're lucky, you'll catch guitarist Ernie Ranglin, a Jamaican musical legend in his mid-sixties. Ranglin has quietly steered a resurgence toward ska, a syncopated, cheerful, funky rhythm he helped create in the studios forty years ago. Lately he's passed ska on to a new wave of bands like No Doubt, 311, Sublime, and the Mighty Mighty Bosstones, who have brought back his long-forgotten ska riffs to Top 40 radio and MTV.

Anguilla

Little Anguilla, a British island in the Leewards, just off the St. Martin coast, is gaining notice for its outstanding beaches, plush resorts, and excellent homegrown rhythms. The chief music maker is Bankie Banx, an Anguillan balladeer whose blend of blues, folk, and reggae has made him a hit in the surrounding islands, and a frequent performer in New York clubs. Banx—incorporating a bit of Dylan, Marley,



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and Ray Charles in one—is the quiet force behind the island's annual Moonsplash, an easygoing music fest that's held on the full moonlit night in March at Rendezvous Bay.

Aruba

On Aruba, you won't have to look far to find Claudius Philips, the Calypso King, and his fourteen-member band, O.R.E.O. (One Really Exciting Organization). With his patented style and fun-loving lyrics, Philips and his group are a fixture at Aruba's Carnival. They also play nights at local clubs, poolside at some of the bigger resorts, and can be seen on the Dutch neighbor islands, Curaçao and Bonaire. Philips has recorded a half-dozen CDs including his latest hit, "Hisa Mi Salario" (Raise My Salary). A versatile artist, he writes his own music and lyrics, plays piano, drums, and bass, and performs in Papiamento, Spanish, Dutch, and English.

Bonaire

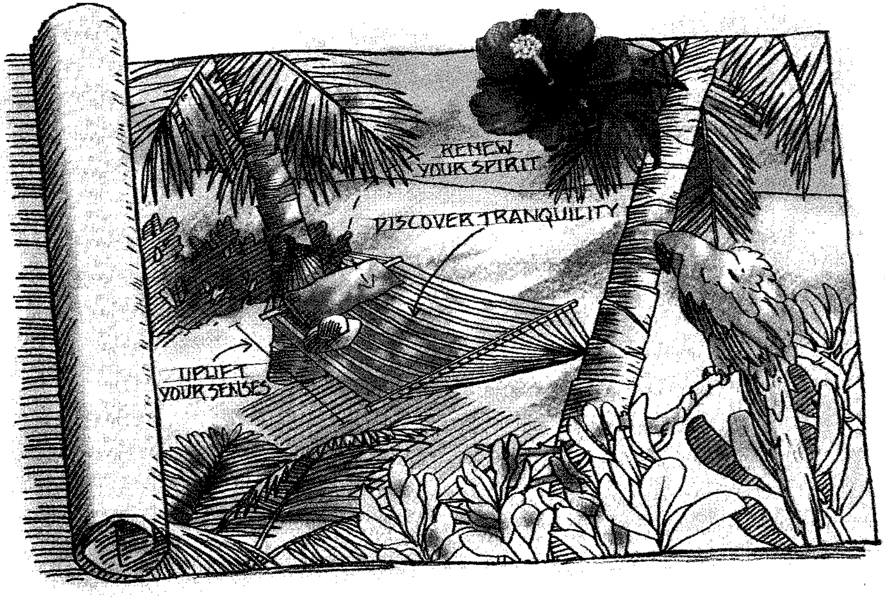
Bonaire, best known for its deep-sea diving, is also gaining recognition for its lively nightlife. Bands such as Piedra de Bonaire, Kunuku Band, Up-Section, and Magic Song play the hotels and are featured at clubs like the jumping Karel's on the Kralendijk waterfront. Magic Song's Sunday parties at Lac Bay have become an island tradition.

Curaçao

You'll find yourself swaying to the catchy beat of tumba in the weeks leading up to Curaçao's Carnival. *Tumba* (toom´-ba) is the salsa of Curaçao and it drives the Carnival Road March, a festival fixture. It's invested with influences of merengue, Afro-Caribbean rhythms, and jazz harmonies. Tumba is for dancing, and the place to do it is the historic plantation house, Landhuis Brievengat. A museum by day, the old place rocks three nights a week to two bands, with tumba, merengue, salsa, jazz, and calypso. Don't confuse tumba with *tambu* (tam-boo´), a vibrant and suggestive dance with roots in the slave fields. Tambu was taboo and on the decline until several cultural groups gave it new life. Still limited to December and January, public tambu parties are usually held at roadside snack bars. Look for traffic-stopping crowds and listen for the sharp metallic sounds of the *chapi* (a hoe) and the drum-like tambu.

Wherever you go in the Caribbean, you'll find rhythms are the unifying force. In waterfront taverns and nightclubs and hotel lounges, at parades and festivals and street-corner jam sessions, music will light up your visit.

Courtesy of Aruba Tourism Authority



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Bajan Band Garners Top Honors

A rising young band from Barbados, 4D People, won the grand prize in the 1997 Third Annual "Rhythms of the Caribbean" contest, a talent search sponsored by *The New Yorker.*

Channel Hector, a twenty-six-year-old vocalist from the United States Virgin Islands, was the first runner-up. Second runner-up was Hi-Tide, a four-piece contemporary pop group from The Cayman Islands, and third runner-up was Aruba's Qua-Si, which has won Carnival prizes regularly within the last five years.

Channel Hector

Striking a balance between reggae and calypso, 4D People headlined a concert at the Twenty-first Annual Caribbean Tourism Organization Conference, which was held on September 26th in Aruba. The concert was sponsored by *The New Yorker* along with the Caribbean Tourism Organization, American Airlines, and Island Jamaica records. An Island Jamaica headliner, twenty-two-year old Chevelle Franklyn, also performed at the concert.

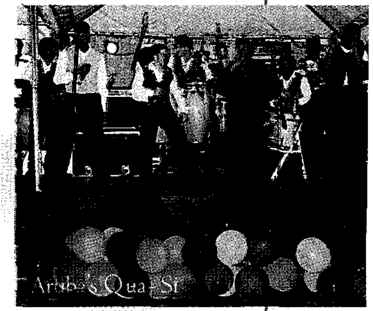
Hi-Tide

© Diane Keijzer/Papiamento

4D's founder, the multi-talented Philip Forester, writes, produces, plays bass, and sings vocals. Shane Forrester, a lead vocalist, brings a dynamism to the stage. Vocalists Toni Norville and Jermaine Forrester and keyboardist Nicholas Baptiste round out the group, which will be featured on a special CD single produced by Island Jamaica as part of its contest-winning spoils.

The three runner-up bands received sound equipment as prizes. American Airlines, which provides service throughout the Caribbean, flew the winners to Aruba for the big concert. Launched in 1995, "Rhythms of the Caribbean" was designed to discover new musical talent and to showcase the region's vast variety of indigenous sounds to an international audience.

Honorable mention in the latest "Rhythms of the Caribbean" promotion went to: LA Kru Band of Antigua and Barbuda; Barrington Hawkins of The Islands Of The Bahamas; Santinos Messengers of Belize; Piedra di Bonaire of Bonaire; Quito Rymer of the British Virgin Islands; WCK of Dominica; Chichi Peralta of the Dominican Republic; Alban Fredrik of Grenada; Aubrey London of Guyana; Kanpech of Haiti; Thaddeus Nichelson of Saba; Duo RHI of St. Barts; Michael Boothman & Kytofusion of Trinidad & Tobago; and the Sagittarius Band of the Turks and Caicos Islands.



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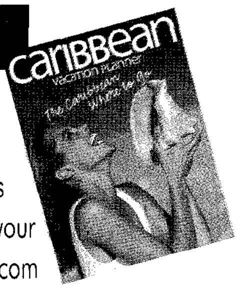

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a. bouyon b. calypso c. fungi
d. merengue e. quelbe f. ring-bang
g. salsa h. zouk

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Caribbean Festivals Calendar

1997

November

monthlong	National Independence Festival of Creative Arts; Barbados

December

1	Bari Festival; Bonaire
5-14	International Jazz Festival; Martinique, FWI
13	Steel Band Christmas Concert; Tortola, BVI
17-25	Nine Mornings (pre-Christmas celebration); St. Vincent & the Grenadines
19	Scratch/Fungi Band Fiesta; Tortola, BVI

1998

January

1	New Year's Day Junkanoo Parade; Nassau, The Islands Of The Bahamas
11	Calysonian Contest and Road March Contest; San Nicolas, Aruba
11-25	St. Barts Music Festival; FWI
14-18	"Paint It Jazz" Festival; Barbados
15-18	Third Annual Blues Heritage Festival; St. Croix, USVI

February

(*Carnival celebrations on many islands throughout the month*)

2-6	Tumba Festival; Festival Center, Curaçao
4-6	Bob Marley Symposium of Music; Kingston and Ocho Rios, Jamaica
5-8	Reggae Sunsplash; Ocho Rios, Jamaica
6	Bob Marley Birthday Bash; Montego Bay, Jamaica
24-25	Mardi Gras through Ash Wednesday, climax of Carnival; FWI

March

8	Fourth Annual Jost Van Dyke Music Festival at Foxy's Tamarind Club; BVI
12-14	Negril Music Festival; Jamaica
19-Apr. 8	Holders Opera Season; Barbados
30-Apr. 6	Carnival; Kingston, Ocho Rios, and Montego Bay, Jamaica

April

13	Easter Folkloric Parade celebrating harvest; Curaçao
25	Carnival; St. Thomas, USVI
30	Summer Jam; Noord; Aruba
30	Rincon Day; Bonaire

May

monthlong	Le Mai de St. Pierre (arts exhibition); St. Pierre, Martinique, FWI
5	Cinco de Mayo; Mexico
7-11	St. Lucia Jazz Festival, various sites
last week	Puerto Rico Heineken Jazz Fest; San Juan, Puerto Rico

June	
first two weeks	Casals Festival; Puerto Rico
12-21	Festival de Jazz à la Plantation; Martinique, FWI
14-21	Ocho Rios Jazz Festival; Jamaica
25-28	St. Kitts Music Festival
28-Aug. 3	Crop Over festival; Barbados
July	
4	Carnival; St. John, USVI
25-Aug. 4	Carnival; St. John's, Antigua
25-Aug. 5	Emancipation Festival; Road Town, Tortola, BVI
August	
1-2	Salsa Festival; Festival Center, Curaçao
3-8	Reggae Sumfest; Catherine Hall, Montego Bay, Jamaica
September	
last week	Inter-American Festival of the Arts; Luis A. Ferré Performing Arts Center, San Juan, Puerto Rico
October	
2-3	Jazz Festival; Sea Aquarium Beach, Curaçao
28	International Creole Day; St. Lucia
November	
monthlong	National Independence Festival of Creative Arts; Barbados
1	Creole Music Festival, Guadeloupe

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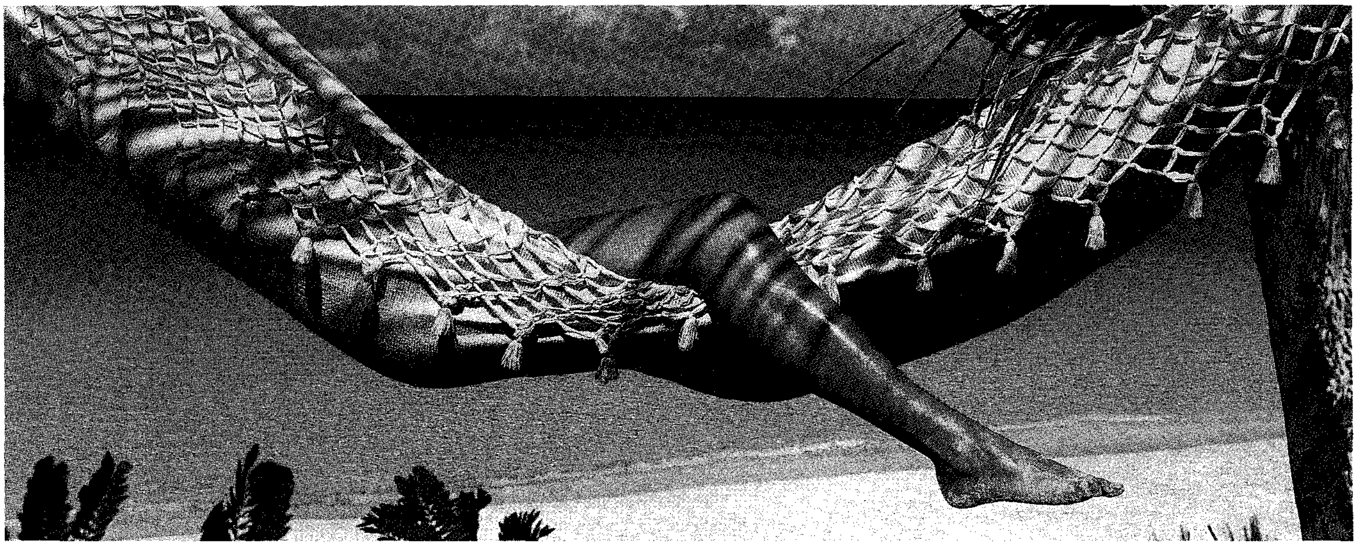

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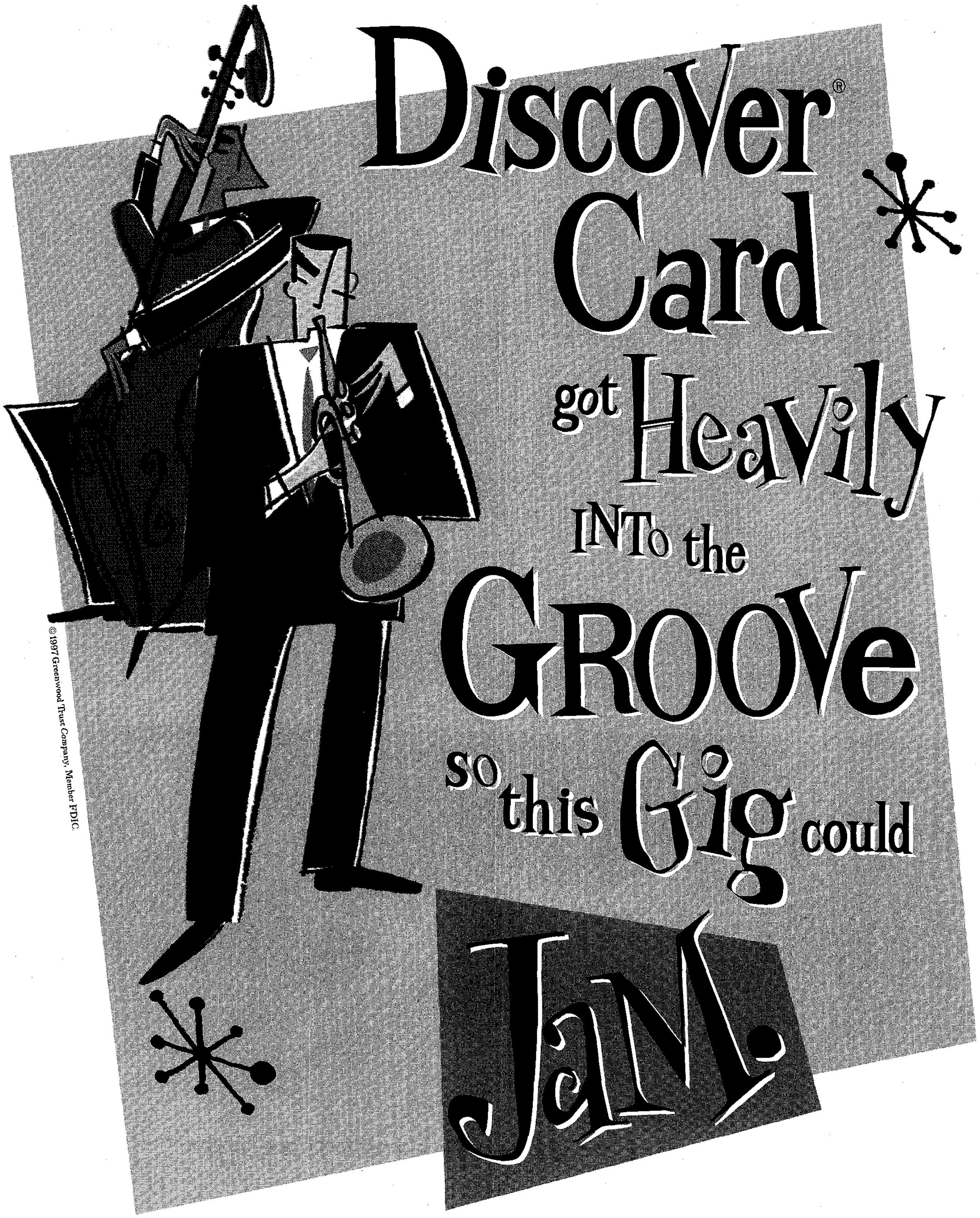
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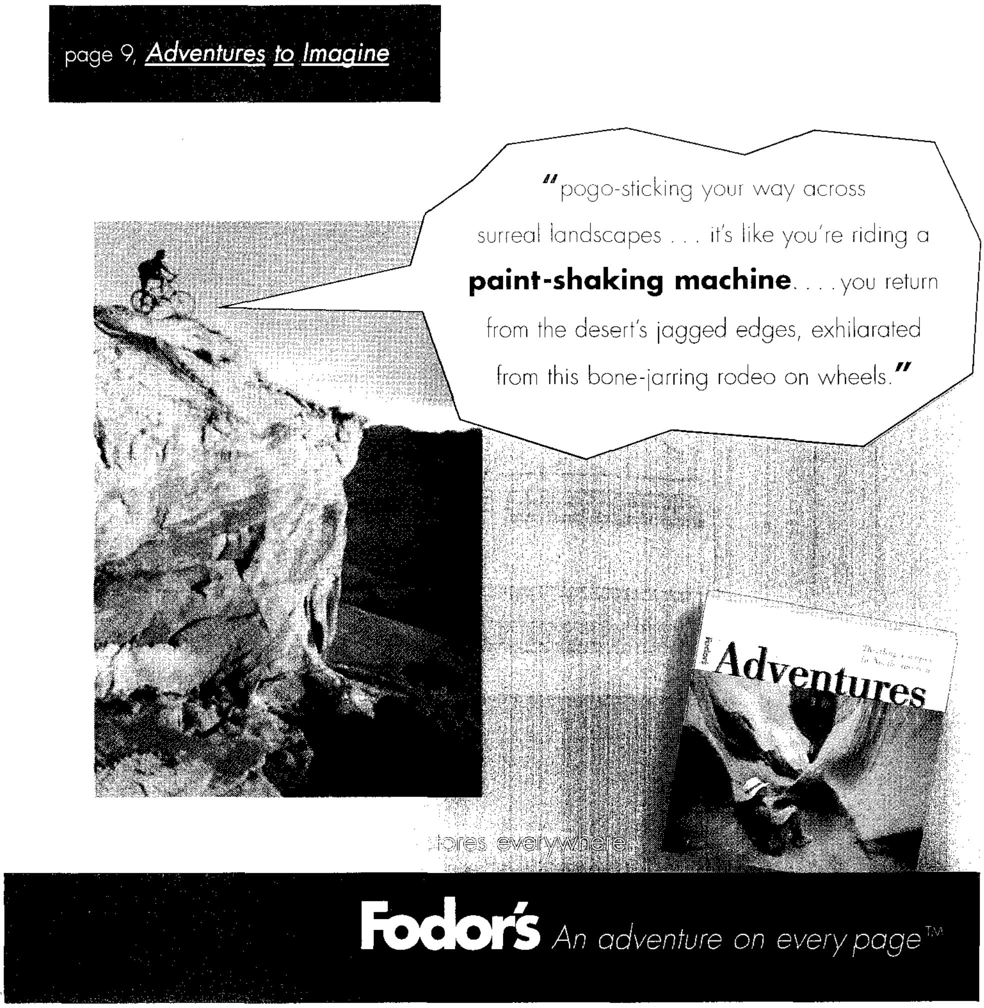
called Marisco del Caribe. Pretty soon, we had twenty tables. I worked fourteen-hour days. Plus I was driving a cab." In 1993, when his father had become too ill to work, Jimmy bought the Oldsmobile showroom with a twenty-three-thousand-dollar down payment, moved the restaurant there—as Jimmy's Bronx Café—and hired a Latino chef. "We opened on a Tuesday in the middle of a snowstorm. By Saturday, I had a line out the door," he says. If the community needed a restaurant, it soon became apparent to Jimmy that it needed a night club as well. He began throwing private salsa parties on the terrace, and they became so renowned that last year he opened them to the public.

Jimmy's ascent has not been quite as smooth as his customary demeanor suggests. As a teen, he was once arrested three times in a single week; as he explains it, he just happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. "So the first time I'm just going along with my friend to collect a debt, a numbers debt, and suddenly we're arrested for robbery." Jimmy says he was unaware that his friend was carrying a gun. Three days later, Jimmy was in a car with friends, one of whom had some marijuana. When the car was stopped by the police, all the passengers were arrested. "And then I'm at this record shop, it turns out to be a drug spot, but I have no idea it's a drug spot." Jimmy's visit coincided with a police raid, and he was arrested again. "The guy I'm locked up with this third time is the same guy I'm accused of robbing. I mean, how do you explain that, if I was supposed to have robbed the guy?" If on paper his explanations seem to strain credulity, his ingenuousness is such that on his lips they sound almost persuasive, if somewhat confusing. At any rate, the judge was convinced. Eventually, all three charges were dropped, and the episode appears to have been a revelatory one for Jimmy. "The biggest experience of my life was spending a week in jail," he says. "I decided I was not the type of person who was ever going to go back." This sense of the road nearly taken seems to be what drives Jimmy to devote a great deal of time to working with young people. His fondest wish is to be a role model in a community that has too few of them. "Is it true you're a millionaire?" he was asked after he delivered an inspirational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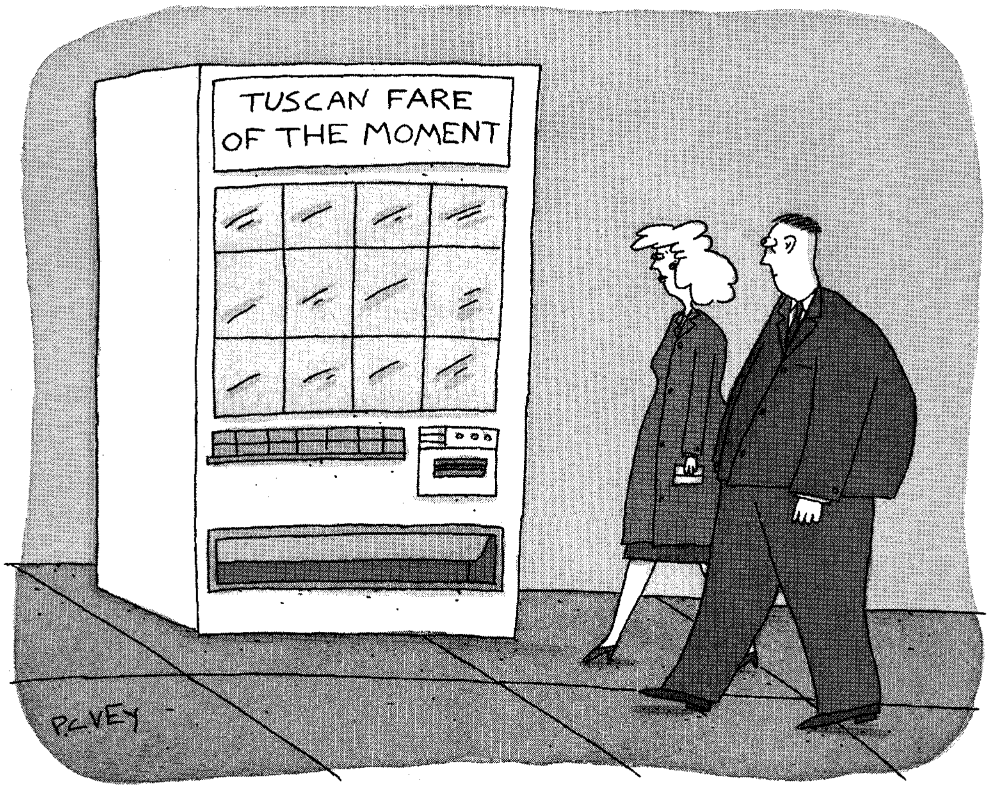

TUSCAN FARE OF THE MOMENT
P.C. VEY

speech at Independence Inn, a shelter for homeless teen-age boys in Brooklyn.

Despite his resolution, Jimmy was given one final scare by the criminal-justice system. Among his earliest and most faithful customers at Marisco del Caribe was an alleged drug dealer named Sammy Aponte-Vega. In 1991, when the United States Attorney's office went after him, it decided to go after Jimmy, too, alleging that he had permitted Aponte-Vega to conduct business on the premises. Aponte-Vega was convicted; a civil case against Jimmy was dropped.

Trouble followed him to his new location. After several shootings occurred outside Jimmy's, major-league-baseball officials warned players against patronizing the restaurant. Eventually, the warning was rescinded, right about the time that Jimmy courted a boycott by hosting a dinner at the restaurant for Fidel Castro during his 1995 United Nations visit. Hundreds of demonstrators stood across the street chanting “Death to Fidel!” while members of the National Puerto Rican Business Council and selected guests dined on roast pig, *arroz con gandules* (pigeon peas and rice), and *alcapurrias* (a sort of dumpling made of plantains and ground beef). Castro was consulted by Jimmy and the chef, Joe Torres, about the menu. “The man is crazy for food,” Jimmy says. Politics was not discussed. “We talked food and baseball.” Jimmy received death threats for months afterward, and his business suffered: he still doesn't get many Cuban customers. He claims to be apolitical, and he does attend Republican as well as Democratic events. “I judge politicians strictly in terms of what they do for the community,” he says.

Jimmy has since visited Castro in Havana; Castro's autographed baseball uniform hangs in his office, framed beside a wall of twenty-nine video monitors on which he surveys the restaurant and club. “He's a cool guy,” Jimmy says, fondling a Cohiba cigar. “He's got different houses all over town and he sleeps in a different house every night, so they won't be able to bomb him. You ever been to Cuba, man? Fantastic! You can party twenty-four-seven. And the women? Fahgedaboudit!” Married for thirteen years, Jimmy recently separated from his wife; a workaholic father of three, he is clearly ready to savor the rewards of his success.

On a recent Thursday night, the dancers at Jimmy's are swooping and dipping to “Me Tengo Que Ir,” by Los Adolescentes, the love song that has been haunting every Latino neighborhood in New York for months. Standing beside the dance floor, Jimmy is buttonholed by a striking young woman in a tight floor-length black sheath and gold spike heels. She's clearly upset. “Who's that girl you was talking to before?”

“What girl?” Jimmy is genuinely perplexed. It's an embarrassment-of-riches situation. Whom hasn't he talked to? His accuser points to a siren in a red dress, smiling from a table beside the dance floor.

“I'm gonna go ask her myself.”

“Oh, her?” Jimmy says. “You don't want to talk to *her*.” He leans down and whispers, “That's my wife's cousin.”

Mollified, drawn into the conspiracy, the woman in black winks and shimmies off. Jimmy turns to his right-hand man, Richard Turley, a veteran of the Manhattan club scene from the days of Studio 54, who, with his slicked-back coif and impeccable tailoring, looks as if he could be a bandleader from the fifties. “How many times have I used *that* line?” Jimmy asks.

“YOU are the Caucasian invasion,” Jorge says, grabbing my lapel in a manner that is either intimate or intimidating, or both. “What the hell are you doing here, man?” Five feet two in tasselled loafers, eyes glazed and enigmatic behind pink-smoked aviator shades, Jorge wants to warn me that I am out of my element. We are at the Latin Quarter, on Broadway at Ninety-sixth. It's a Saturday night, about two in the morning. The dance floor is jumping to the multi-horn sound of El Gran Combo—“the Rolling Stones of salsa.”

“Don't you realize there are some very dangerous people here?” Jorge says. At this moment, it's difficult to separate the message from the messenger. When Jorge learns that I am with Jimmy, his tone changes; for one thing, he lets go of my lapel. “You're safe with Jimmy,” he says. “Jimmy's the king.”

Jimmy arrives, with drinks. Although it's almost impossible that he could have heard anything from the other side of the room, over the din of the music, he seems to have picked up the gist and not to have liked it. “What's this bullshit you're selling?” he demands. Jorge reaches up, trying to get an arm around Jimmy's shoulders.

“I am your biggest fan, Jimmy. You are the king.”

"Get out of here," Jimmy says.

"You're the best, Jimmy."

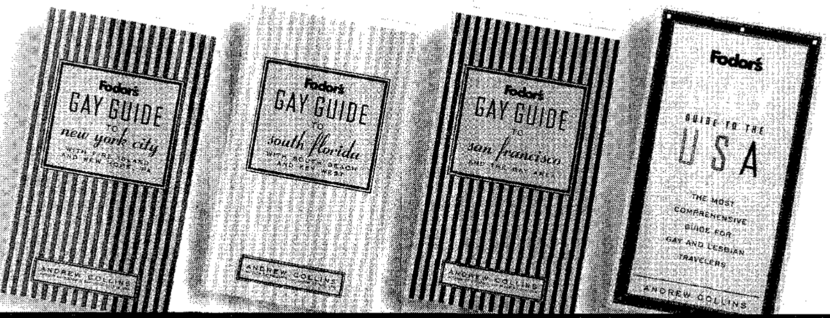
Jimmy rolls his eyes. "Let's go find some girls."

A voice from the stage announces, to scattered applause, that "Jimmy Bronx" is in the house, and Jimmy shakes hands as he moves through the crowd. He greets Ricky Ricardo (no relation), a former d.j. for WBLS radio. Los Hermanos Rosario, a hot merengue group, is onstage, animating the dancers, several of whom leap onto the stage to show their moves. Jimmy exchanges kisses with Darlene Pomales, a reporter for CBS Radio. "She should be on television," he says. "Darlene," he tells her, "I swear, if you didn't have a boyfriend . . ."

At 3 A.M., Jimmy decides that we should go to the Copacabana—not the legendary room on Fifth Avenue but its new incarnation, over by the West Side Highway. On the way out, Jimmy grabs a drink for the road. As we walk down the stairs, he lays out the weekly schedule of Salsa Nation: "Monday night, S.O.B.'s. Tuesday night, Copa. Wednesday night, Life. Thursday night, Jimmy's. Friday night, Roxy. And Saturday night, Latin Quarter." But Jimmy plans to capture more nights with a new room he has just opened adjacent to the restaurant, a ten-thousand-square-foot space with a huge stage for bands and with windows looking out over the Harlem River. He has already made a move across the river, recently buying a restaurant on 131st Street, in Harlem, which will house the second Jimmy's Bronx Café. After that, he has his eye on Miami and L.A.

At street level, a young woman working the door tries to stop Jimmy. "You can't leave with that drink," she says. Jimmy gives her a look that combines censure and injury—a look that says, "Are you really sure about that?" Suddenly, a doorman rushes over to intervene. "That's Jimmy," he says, scowling at the woman before shaking Jimmy's hand and ushering him out onto Broadway.

After a stop at the Copa, Jimmy decides to call it quits at four-thirty. He's got to speak to a group of senior citizens in the morning. As he drives off toward the Bronx in a new white Ford Expedition, cell phone pressed to his ear, a young woman in a silver-lamé dress and silver spike heels rushes from the club and runs with rapid little sandpiper steps up the street, chasing him, shouting, "Stop, Jimmy, stop! You didn't say goodbye!" ◆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PROFILE

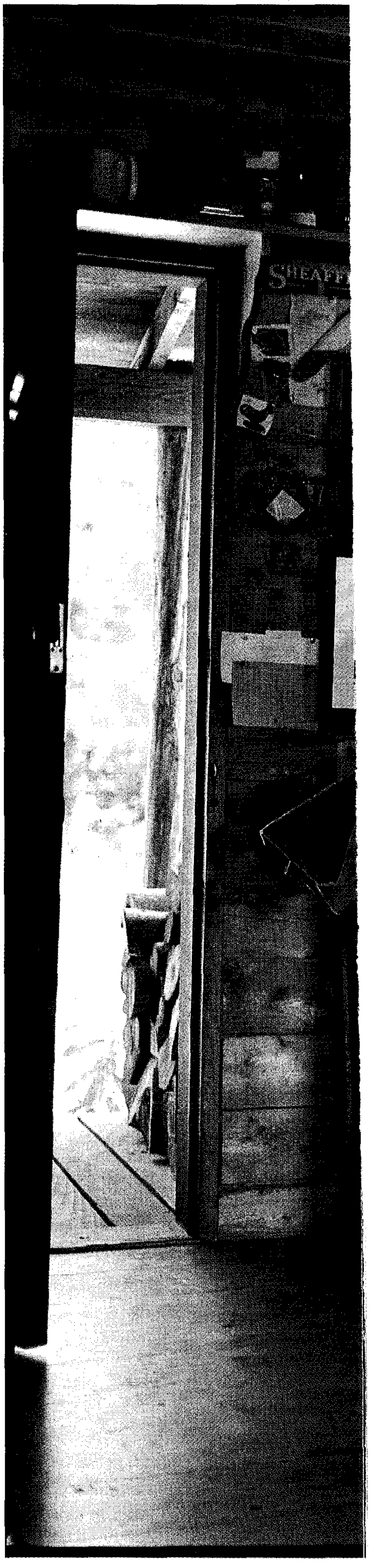
FORTRESS MAMET

Where did the playwright get his gift for the swagger of American speech?

BY JOHN LAHR

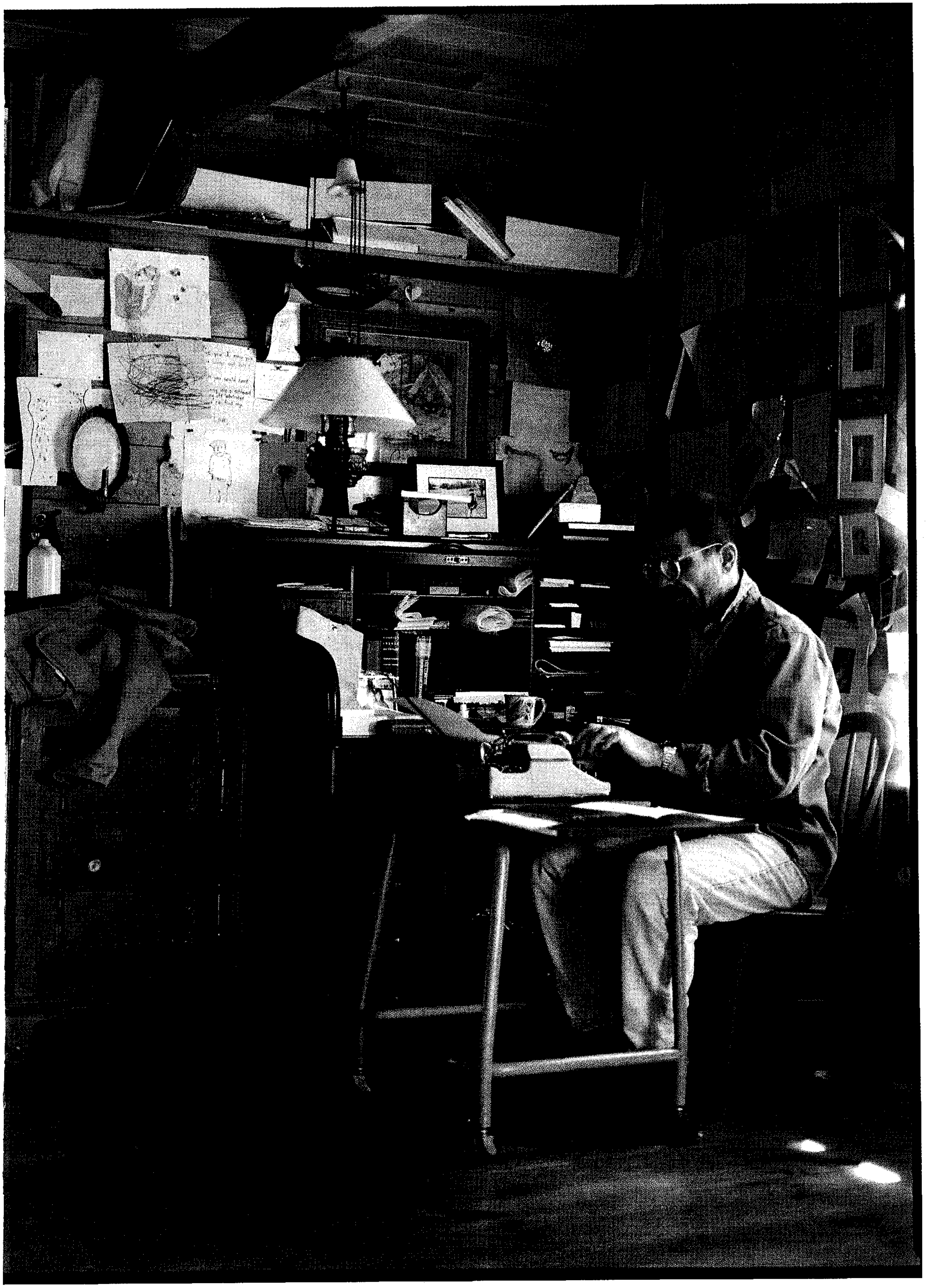
WHEN I met David Mamet this summer, he made me the gift of a Boy Scout knife. On one side of the knife was the Scout motto: "Be prepared." The words, which invoke both prowess and paranoia, seemed to sum up the twin themes of Mamet's work, and of his guarded life. We were sitting in the back room of his headquarters, on the second floor of a two-story yellow clapboard building on Eliot Street in Cambridge, Massachusetts, at a table with a large Second World War poster hanging over it which read "Loose Talk Can Cost Lives! Keep It Under Your Stetson." There was no identifying name on the bell to the front door or on the office door. You had to feel your way along until you found Mamet hidden away, which is how it is with him. Mamet, who is masterly at communicating his meanings in public, is prickly in private. He is a small but powerfully built man; in the stillness of his presence and in the precision of his sentences, he exudes an imposing, specific gravity. "Fortress Mamet" is how Ed Koren, the cartoonist and Mamet's Vermont neighbor, refers to the emotional no-go area that Mamet creates around himself, and I was acutely aware of this hazardous moat as Mamet eased into a chair across the table from me, wearing his summer camouflage: a khaki baseball cap, khaki shorts, and a purple-and-brown Hawaiian shirt. Over the years, Mamet has adopted many fustian public disguises to counterpoint a personal style that Albert Takazauckas, the director of his first Off Broadway hit, "Sexual Perversity in Chicago," in 1976, characterizes as "blunt, blunt, blunt." He adds, "It's his lovely cover." As the star of Chicago's booming Off Loop theatre scene in the early seventies, Mamet affected Che's guerrilla look: fatigues, combat boots, a beret, and, for good measure, a cape. After his Pulitzer Prize for "Glengarry Glen Ross" (1984), his play about salesmen in a cutthroat real-estate competition, Mamet assumed a Brechtian swagger: cigar, clear plastic eyeglass frames, and open collar, which consolidated in one iconic image the powerhouse and the proletarian. Now, in his mellow middle age, Mamet has forsworn the cigar and adopted the posture of rural gent: work boots, bluejeans, Pendleton shirt, and trimmed beard. In all these guises, the one constant is Mamet's crewcut, which dips like a tree line over the craggy promontory of his broad forehead and gives him an austere first appearance. "The crewcut . . . is an *honest* haircut," he has written. "It is the haircut of an honest, two-pair-of-jeans working man—a man from Chicago."

Mamet is certainly a workingman, even though, at a million and a half dollars a movie, he's far from a wage slave. He has written twenty-two plays, six collections of essays, two novels, and fourteen films, five of which he also directed. He belongs in the pantheon of this century's great dramatists; he has done for American theatre at the end of the century what his hero, the iconoclastic sociologist Thorstein Veblen, did for American sociology at the beginning: provide a devastating, often hilarious new idiom to dissect the follies of American life. Mamet's muscular imagination strips dialogue of literary nicety and robs plot of that naturalistic decoration which has progressively tamed theatre. His plays, though rooted in reality, are fables, whose uniqueness lies in their distinctive music—a terse, streamlined orchestration of thought, language, and character



PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRIGITTE LACOMBE

Mamet at work: Writing, he says, "stills the need to be accepted and the need to be revenged."



"Here we go—Xena, Warrior Princess, versus Sheena, Queen of the Jungle."

which draws viewers in and makes them work for meaning. No other American playwright, except perhaps Tennessee Williams, has ranged so widely. (Mamet is the only major American playwright ever to succeed as a screenwriter.) Three of his movies—"The Edge" (with Anthony Hopkins and Alec Baldwin), "Wag the Dog" (with Robert De Niro and Dustin Hoffman), and "The Spanish Prisoner" (with Steve Martin), which he also directed—are being released this year, which turns out, on November 30th, to be his fiftieth.

Mamet claims he doesn't lose his temper, but anger still defines him. "He's a coiled snake," his forty-six-year-old sister, the screenwriter Lynn Mamet, says. To those who have passed the test of loyalty, Mamet is an amusing, endearing, vigilant friend. "He was and continues to be one of the funniest and silliest people I've ever met," says the comedian Jonathan Katz, who has been Mamet's best friend since their days at Goddard College, in Vermont, and with whom Mamet conceived the film "House of Games." "He was a master of disguises. We would have this running gag. Whenever one of us was meeting the other guy at the airport, we would be in disguise. One of my favorite disguises was when he was sitting in the airport with a paper bag on his head and smoke coming out of it. He was smoking a cigar under the paper bag." In public conversation, however, Mamet is courtly and wary; his style of discourse is not so much straight talk as Indian wrestling. He wrong-foots the listener with a curious brew of slang and erudition, mixing words like "ain't," "marvy," "jolly," "vouchsafe," "desuetude" in the same breath. There's a jaunty smile in these sentences, but a smile with cold teeth. "Oh, goody gumdrops," he said when I told him I'd be able to join him in Cabot, Vermont, where he owns a farmhouse and a hundred-acre parcel of rolling land. "Goody gumdrops from the gumdrop tree."

As I attempted to ask him unwelcome questions about his childhood, the presence of the Boy Scout knife on the table reminded me of the knife that the distraught ten-year-old boy John flashes in Mamet's autobiographical masterpiece "The Cryptogram"—a play about the betrayal of the boy by his parents. He is on the stairway looking down at the living room, where his mother, abandoned by his father and unable to meet his emotional needs, sits in the tortured last beat of the play. At whom, exactly, is the boy's murderous energy aimed, himself or others? His gesture foreshadows the life of the playwright, who learned to turn aggression into art: the knife became a pen. Knives are tools of creation as well as of destruction, and Mamet likes to whittle. His specialty is carving animal figures for his three daughters—Willa (fourteen) and Zosia (nine), both from his twelve-year marriage to the actress Lindsay Crouse, which ended in 1991; and Clara (three), from his marriage, in the same year, to the Scottish actress and singer Rebecca Pidgeon.

The knife as an ambiguous symbol of penetration is the central metaphor of "Three Uses of the Knife," a collection of Mamet's lectures about theatre to be published later this year, in which he recounts an anecdote first told by the blues singer Huddie Ledbetter, better known as Leadbelly, who once said, "You take a knife, you use it to cut the bread, so you'll have strength to work; you use it to shave, so you'll look nice for your lover; on discovering her with another, you use it to cut out her lying heart." In its affecting irony, this progression illustrates for Mamet the essential elements of dramatic structure; it also demonstrates, he writes, "the attempt of the orderly, affronted mind to confront the awesome."

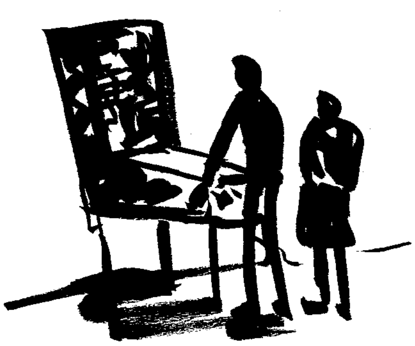
If Mamet felt affronted now, it was by my request that he turn back to the memory of his past. "My childhood, like many people's, was not a bundle of laughs. So what?" he said. "I always skip that part of the biography." After a while, he added, "This might help. There's a movie I'm hoping to do in the fall about making a movie. The female movie star is having a breakdown. She's crying. She says, 'I never had a childhood.' The director puts his arm around her. He says, 'I had one. It's no big deal.' "

DESPITE his disclaimer, the dominating themes of Mamet's work—the sense of not belonging, the imperative of speaking out, the betrayal by authority—evolve directly out of his childhood. He was the firstborn son of two handsome, highly intelligent, upwardly mobile first-generation Americans, Leonore (Lee) and Bernie Mamet, whose families were Ashkenazi Jews from Russia and Poland. "Are you an only child?" I asked Mamet when we first met, in 1983. "Yes," Mamet said, "except for my sister." "We lived in an emotional hurricane," says Lynn Mamet, the extrovert of the pair, who still speaks to her brother almost every day from her home on a scorched hillside canyon in Los Angeles. She adds, "We were safe for each other." Until their parents divorced bitterly, in 1958, when David was eleven and Lynn was eight, they lived on Euclid Avenue in Chicago's South Shore Highlands, in a capacious three-story red brick house that stood as a kind of totem to the Mamet family's self-invention. "My life was expunged of any tradition at all. Nothing old in the house. No color in the house," Mamet told me. "The virtues expounded were not creative but remedial: let's stop being Jewish, let's stop being poor." Lynn says, "There was a great deal of pressure for us to be the best Americans we could be. There was no room for us to make mistakes." She and her brother lived in fear of the ferocity of parental expectations—what Lynn calls "hoops of fire." "It was succeed or die," Mamet says.

Bernie Mamet, a tough labor lawyer who represented over three hundred unions, and once argued—and won—a case before the Supreme Court, preached an exacting semantic gospel of precision, nuance, and observation. "The map is not the territory" was one of Bernie's mantras, which voiced his bedrock belief that nothing was all black or all white. He hectored his children to listen "with the inner ear," and, according to his second wife, Judy Mamet, played games with them to build up their powers of observation and memory. " 'Stickler' is a soft word for my father's attachment to the absolute necessity of expressing yourself correctly," Lynn Mamet says. "It's just that what was correct changed on a daily basis." In the crossfire of family conversation, David grew quickly into an agile sparring partner for his parents, and also learned to listen defensively. "From the earliest age, one had to think, be careful about what one was going to say, and also how the other person was going to respond," says Mamet, whose celebrated "ear for dialogue" evolved out of listening for danger. "In my family," he once said, "in the days prior to television, we liked to while away the evenings by making ourselves miserable, solely based on our ability to speak the language viciously."

Indeed, Mamet's prolific output and his compulsion to master skills (writing, directing, piano playing, sharpshooting) are a daily reiteration of competence in adulthood which seeks to redress a childhood whose litany was "You are not living up to your potential." Lee, who Mamet says "kind of created this wonderful persona of elegance," also had a short fuse and a sharp tongue. "You just didn't know where it was coming from—she could blow at any minute," Lynn says. "When they harvested the bipolar patch, she ripened first." To Lynn, Lee said, "If only I could have had a pretty daughter"; and, to David, "I love you but I don't like you." Lee had elusive verbal ways of parrying her children's demands, and this mystification, where what was being said wasn't what was meant, brought with it a sense of helplessness and frustration. Mamet demonstrates the shifting sand of this dynamic in "The Cryptogram," where John, the distressed young boy, can't make himself seen or heard by his self-involved mother, Donny. John is suicidal, and when he confesses his dark thoughts to her she seems to acknowledge them but then both literally and figuratively wanders away:

> JOHN: Do you ever wish you could die? (*Pause.*) It's not such a bad feeling. Is it?
> DONNY: I know that you're frightened. I know you are. But at some point, do you see . . . ? (*Pause. Exits.*) (*Offstage*) John, everyone has a story. Do you know that? In their lives. This is yours.



The boy's anxiety goes uncontained; throughout the play he is almost never touched or held. "They were not tactile," Lynn says of her parents. "If they were tactile, it was like being touched by a porcupine." Mamet is more forgiving: "They didn't have a clue," he says, explaining that Bernie and Lee had their children in their early twenties. Still, his portrayal of John's demoralized childhood and narcissistic mother connects to the notion of the "corrupt parent" that Mamet later outlined in one of his essays: "The corrupt parent says: 'If you wish to be protected you must withhold all judgment, powers of interpretation, and individual initiative. *I* will explain to you what things mean, and how to act in every situation.' " David himself was always in trouble for speaking up at home. "He would tilt at every fucking windmill," Lynn says. At such moments, his mother would say, "David, why must you *dramatize* everything?" "She said it to me as a *criticism*," Mamet told me. "I found out—it took me forty years to find out—that rhetorical questions are all accusations. They're very, very sneaky accusations."

Between his mother's mixed messages and his father's high standards, Mamet, who from an early age was a voracious reader but a wretched student, grew up believing he was stupid. "I was like the professor in 'Oleanna' "—his controversial play about a university professor accused by his pupil of sexual harassment—"who all his life had been told he was an idiot, so he behaved like one," Mamet says. "I just always assumed people assumed I was gonna come to a bad end." In "Jolly," an autobiographical one-act play that is part of three meditations on his past called "The Old Neighborhood," which opens on Broadway this month, he addresses the psychological sleight of mind by which parents project their own inadequacy onto their children, as a grownup brother and sister sit talking about the sins of their parents:

> BOB: . . . That's their way. That's their way. That's their swinish, selfish, *goddam* them. What *treachery* have they not done, in the name of . . .
> JOLLY: . . . I know . . .
> BOB: . . . of "honesty." God *damn* them. And always "telling" us we . . .
> JOLLY: . . . yes
> BOB: . . . we were the bad ones.

In Mamet's family, the helpless collusion of children with their parents' sadism was acted out in good times as well as bad. In his essay "The Rake" he recounts one such incident that took place after the family went out to dinner. "My stepfather and mother would walk to the car, telling us that they would pick us up," he writes. "We children would stand by the restaurant entrance. They would drive up in the car, open the passenger door, and wait until my sister and I had started to get in. Then they would drive away. They would drive ten or fifteen feet and open the door again, and we would walk up again, and they would drive away again." He continues, "They sometimes would drive around the block. But they would always come back, and by that time the four of us would be laughing in camaraderie and appreciation of what, I believe, was our only family joke."

In 1958, Lee married Bernie's law associate—a close family friend, also named Bernie. She had moved out of the house with the kids, and they ended up in Olympia Fields, on the outskirts of Chicago, which Mamet called New South Hell. She didn't inform the children of her wedding plans. "We'd been in Florida with my father," Lynn says. "We came home. They said, 'How was your weekend?' We said, 'O.K. How was yours?' They said, 'We got married.' David responded 'So what else is new?' and went into the other room." He was profoundly distressed by his impulsive, fist-pounding stepfather, who occasionally punched Lynn, and broke the glass top of the kitchen table several times with his explosions of temper, "so the table was associated in our minds with the notion of blood," Mamet writes in "The Rake." His anxiety about this new "cobbled-together family" is powerfully evoked in his description of one afternoon in Olympia Fields, when, as his sister remembers it, she came out to call him in to dinner while he was raking leaves. He hit Lynn in the face with the rake. "He opened up the whole side of my face," Lynn, who still has a scar above her lip from her brother's outburst, says. "If you could pick a single incident in David's life which has constantly eviscerated him, it was possibly that act, which also explained a great deal to him internally. How he felt: his anger, his rage, his confusion, his life." But neither child—David out of guilt, Lynn "out of a desire to avert the terrible punishment she knew I would receive"—would fess up to Lee about what had happened. "My mother pressed us," Mamet writes. "She said that until one or the other answered, we would not go to the hospital; and so the family sat down to dinner, while my sister clutched a napkin to her face and the blood soaked the napkin and ran down onto her food, which she had to eat; and I also ate my food, and we cleared the table and went to the hospital." In a way, Mamet's iconoclasm as a writer is a means of understanding and of finding words for his fury. It also, he says, "stills two warring needs—the need to be accepted and the need to be revenged."

At the age of fifteen, after a series of blowups with his mother and stepfather, Mamet returned to Chicago to live with his father, on Lake Shore Drive. Although he was offered an airy, ample room, he chose to live in the maid's quarters near the back door, which made escape easy.

But Mamet could never escape his father. "Bernie Mamet was clearly the intense relationship of David's life, and there seems to be no aspect of the relationship of father to son that they did not explore to hell," says the director Gregory Mosher, who is Mamet's foremost interpreter and has collaborated with him on fifteen plays over the years. Mamet looked like his father; his skepticism and his savage view of entrepreneurial capitalism came from Bernie, who, according to Judy Mamet, regularly "railed against the inequities of commerce," and advised his son, "Don't trust an expert." Mamet remembers this theme being driven home in one of his father's early jokes: "A guy takes his son. He puts him on the mantelpiece, and to his son he says, 'Jump!' Kid says, 'Daddy, I'm frightened.' Father says, 'I'm your father. You kidding? Jump!' Kid jumps. Father steps back and the kid falls on the floor. Dad says, 'That's the first lesson. Don't trust anybody.' "

As a playwright and theorist, Mamet has adopted his father's advocate style of thinking against the system. "He was a winning lawyer. He believed in being smarter than the other guy and working harder than the other guy," says Mamet, who based the character of Jimmy Hoffa, in his 1991 film, on Bernie. "One of Dad's lines I put in the movie," Mamet says. "He said, 'Some people say that the client's gotta pay you to do your best. The client's not paying me to be best, the client's paying me to win.' "

Bernie, who had wanted to go on the stage himself as a young man, was deeply competitive even with his son. "He came to see 'American Buffalo,' " Mamet says. "He said, 'When are you going to chuck all this nonsense and go to law school?' " "He was a very hard man," says Sheila Welch, who observed them during the opening of "Edmond," in 1982, and later became the producer of Mamet's Atlantic Theatre Company. "He was very, very critical. I think he taunted Dave, almost like Mozart's father—you know, 'You have to be better'—but in a sense he secretly didn't want David to be better than him." For about four years in the eighties, the father and the son stopped talking to each other, but they made up after the birth of Mamet's second daughter, in time for Mamet to cast his father as a terrorist in his movie "Homicide." The occasion is memorialized in a photo of them on the set, in which Bernie sits slumped at a table in the foreground, wearing a leather jacket, and above him, dominating the frame, David stands on a radiator giving orders. On July 5, 1991, Mamet stood over his father for the last time, at his funeral. (Bernie had died of cancer, at the age of sixty-eight.) He spoke at the service; afterward, as is the custom in Jewish ceremonies, the mourners filed forward one by one to shovel a spadeful of dirt onto the casket from a huge mound of earth beside the grave. Mamet had his turn. But when the gravedigger picked up the shovel to finish the job Mamet took the shovel back from him without a word and started to fill in the grave himself. It was a blistering summer day. After a while, he took off his jacket, and the wilted mourners watched for nearly forty minutes while he buried his father.

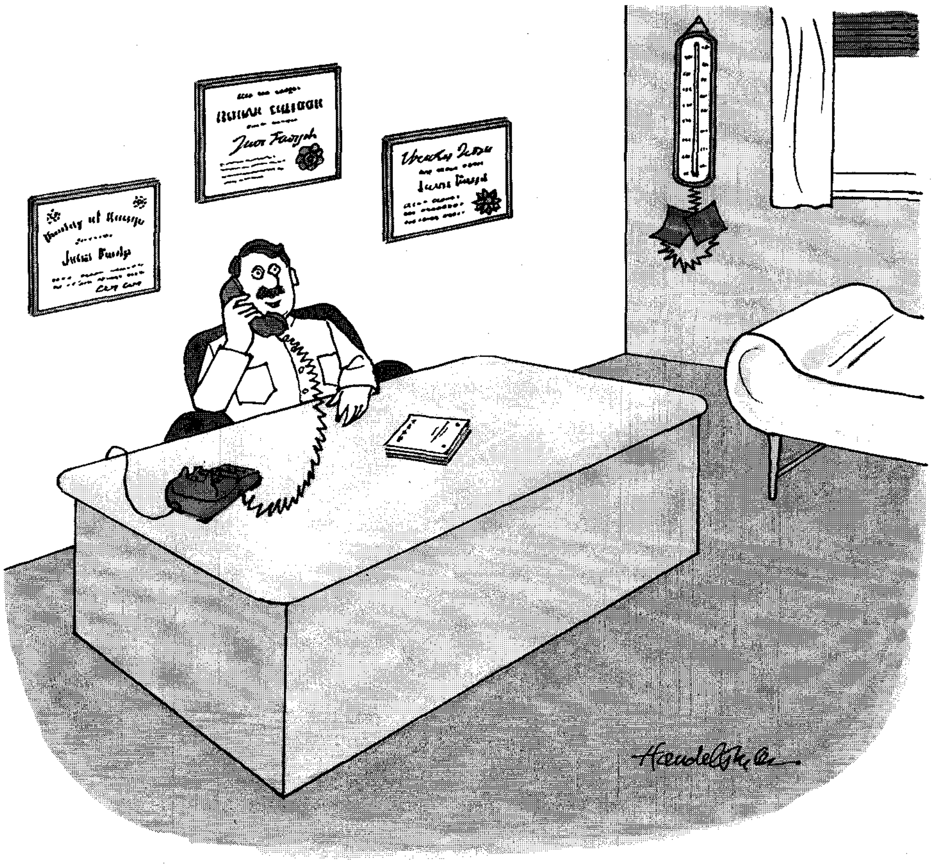
MAMET graduated from Goddard College, which he calls "sex camp," in 1969. By 1975, he was famous. His psychological makeup then, as now, was "essentially that of an unsure student who has finally discovered an idea in which he can believe, and who feels unless he clutches and dedicates himself to that idea, he will be lost." At sixteen, he had become a dogsbody and bit player at Bob Sickinger's innovative Hull House Theatre, in Chicago. "It was the first time in my confused young life that I had learned that work is love," he wrote later. He was by then well read in the literature of avant-garde drama, especially the plays of Harold Pinter. "It was stuff you heard in the street," he says. "It was the stuff you overheard in the taxicab. It wasn't writerly." He adds, "Pinter was sui generis. He was starting out with his vision of the world, and he was going to write it." (Pinter would later champion Mamet. "He sent me, unforgettably, 'Glengarry Glen Ross,' with a note saying 'There is something wrong with this play. What is it?' " Pinter recalls. "I wired him immediately. 'There is nothing wrong with this play. I'm giving it to the National.' ") Mamet began playwriting in his final year of college, after a summer vacation spent working as a busboy and odd-job man at Second City, Chicago's improvisational theatre, and watching comic players like Peter Boyle, Robert Klein, and David Steinberg; the quick cuts and blackouts of their revue format became part of Mamet's early punchy minimalism. "For the next ten years," he said, "none of my scenes lasted more than eight minutes."

Mamet had also taken off his junior year to study acting in New York with the renowned Sanford Meisner, at the Neighborhood Playhouse. Meisner believed that "every play is based upon the reality of doing," that "good acting comes from the heart," and that "there's no mentality in it." He urged his students to "fuck polite"; he devised the Word Repetition Game, in which two actors play off each other, each repeating exactly the words the other has just said, in order to bring out real emotion and impulsive shifts in behavior. Mamet wasn't chosen by Meisner to go on to the next year of classes, but when he began writing plays his distinctive fractured cadences and overlapping dialogue gradually transferred the rigors of the Word Repetition Game from the stage to the page. "I think the rhythm of his dialogue actually comes from the repetition exercises," says Scott Zigler, who has been a member of the Atlantic Theatre Company since its inception, in 1985, and is directing "The Old Neighborhood" on Broadway. "The rhythm is simply the rhythm of being in the moment." For instance, "Sexual Perversity in Chicago" begins:

DANNY: So how'd you do last night?
BERNIE: Are you kidding me?
DANNY: Yeah?
BERNIE: Are you fucking kidding me?
DANNY: Yeah?
BERNIE: Are you pulling my leg?
DANNY: So?
BERNIE: So tits out to here so.

But if it took Mamet a few years to absorb Meisner's teaching into his writing, it took him no time to incorporate Meisner's rogue ideas into what Mamet called his South Side Gypsy attitude. His senior-year project was his first completed play, "Camel"—a revue composed of thirty-four blackout bits based on "the more potent pieces in my journal." (It's a method that Mamet still uses, mining material from the daily ledgers he keeps.) He had never directed a play "in my whole sunlit lifetime," he wrote in the project notes. But, he went on, "I remembered that Acting is Doing. So I just started doing." Mamet had the chutzpah to charge fifty cents admission, a gesture that ruffled a lot of hippie feathers. "I wanted to communicate to the public at large that this was going to be no ordinary theatrical event," he wrote. Also, he added, "I felt like it." The last sentence of the project report served as Mamet's envoi to college life: "It's time for the actor to find another big rock to push up that long hill."

Everyone, including Mamet, conceded that he was not an actor. But in 1970, after undertaking various acting stints and odd jobs, Mamet found himself back in Vermont—this time teaching acting, first at Marlboro College and then, in 1971, at his progressive alma mater, which had no grades, no requirements, no tests. "So here comes Mamet dressed in tailored sailor pants, this tight shirt, with impeccably done hair. He walks like he's got a ramrod up his butt, and he just laid down the law," the actor



"Before we try assisted suicide, Mrs. Rose, let's give the aspirin a chance."

William H. Macy, who is one of Mamet's closest friends, and who was nominated for an Academy Award last year for his performance in "Fargo," says of Mamet's arrival in class. "The first thing he said was 'If you're late, don't come in. If you're not prepared, don't do the class. If you want to learn to act, I'm the guy who can teach you. If you're not here for that, leave.' The class just looked at each other, going, 'Who is this fucking guy?' " Macy continues, "But he won us over. He was not egotistical in any way. He just had this unshakable confidence." Mamet was in the habit of fining latecomers a dollar a minute and then burning their money. After about a year and a half of study, according to Macy, Mamet "walked in one day and said, 'I've written these plays.' It was 'Sexual Perversity in Chicago' "—a comedy about the vagaries of dating which, a few years later, would become Mamet's first hit. "In that incarnation," Macy goes on, "it was a bunch of blackouts—about twelve of them. A role for everyone. Who knew he even wrote?"

MAMET himself seems never to have doubted his playwriting ability. "I was just sure," he says. "I mean, how are you sure you got a fastball?" He adds, "Writing was something I could do. I figured, Well, if you fuck this up, you deserve everything that's gonna happen to you." When Mamet was about twenty-two, a friend sent a draft of "Sexual Perversity in Chicago" to Mike Nichols, who had recently made "Carnal Knowledge"; he said he'd have turned it into a movie right away except that he'd just made one like it. "I thought, Oh my God, these guys actually believe in me," Mamet says. "I better start working right now. I better have another play and another play after that." In 1972, he formed the St. Nicholas Company, in Vermont, with Macy and another of his students, Steven Schachter; in 1973, they shifted their base to Chicago, where, Mamet writes, "the air feels new, and all things still seem possible."

Mamet, who worked in the Windy City only between 1973 and 1977, is either Chicago's most famous New York playwright or New York's most famous Chicago playwright. "Chicago is very, very different from New York," he says. "In Chicago, you lived with your theatre company. The money that you made you shared. If you didn't work together, you starved. You weren't in it for an individual career." Chicago's earthiness extended to its pragmatic literary tradition, which carried with it "an intolerance for the purely ornamental." "Performance art—whatever the hell that may be—would have been completely foreign to Chicago, which is very meat and potatoes," Mamet says. "If it's a comedy it would be a good idea if it were funny." Mamet and his cohorts, who soon added the actress Patricia Cox to their founding group, lived by their wits. They helped fund their productions by giving acting classes. "We invented this myth of the Chicago theatre scene," says Gregory Mosher, who considers having bumped into Mamet in 1975 "the central fact of my life." "What made the Chicago theatre scene was that no one cared. The audience didn't care. They were profoundly indifferent to everything we did."

In those days, Mamet resided and wrote at the Lincoln Hotel. "His room was the size of a closet. He had no belongings. It was Spartan like you can't believe," Macy says. But "from the very first day I met him," a Chicago playwright, Alan Gross, recalled in the Chicago *Tribune* in 1982, "David told me he was an important American playwright.... He was completely self-encapsulated. He knew exactly what he wanted to do and what was expected of him; he had a great rap, a great act." According to the program note for the St. Nicholas's début production, the company was named for the patron saint of "mountebanks, prostitutes, and the demimonde." And Mamet had a bit of the mountebank in him. "He was very, very fast on his feet," the company's first literary manager, Jonathan Abarbanel, says, referring to what he calls Mamet's "intellectual Barnumism." Abarbanel once told the magazine *Chicago*, "He would be talking—'As Aristotle said, blah blah.' Or, 'I was rereading Kierkegaard the other day.' I remember saying, 'Aristotle never said that! You weren't reading Kierkegaard!' And he'd go, 'Sshhh! Don't tell anyone.' "

While Mamet waited tables, drove taxis, and cleaned offices to support his theatrical habit, he turned Chicago into a kind of raffish playground. "He always had very good luck with the ladies," Macy says. "Oh, man, smooth as silk." (One of Mamet's best come-ons—"Is anyone taking up an inordinate amount of your time these days?"—is memorialized in "Sexual Perversity in Chicago.") He explored the city's gritty corners, whose vernacular he savored and kept note of. Among his actor friends, Ed O'Neill had been a football star at Ohio University; Dennis Farina had been a policeman; and J. J. Johnston, a walking lexicon of underworld phrase and fable who was from the South Side, had been a bookie. Having been raised on high culture and hated it, Mamet was drawn to "people who don't institutionalize their thought."

"Dave got hit with the gangster bag early," Johnston, who recalls telling him about the old-time hoods, says. "These crooks, most of them, have pipe dreams. They can't do anything right. Like they say, these guys would fuck up a two-car funeral." Mamet, who has written a lot about criminals, including his screenplays for "The Untouchables," "Things Change," and an upcoming movie about Meyer Lansky, sometimes socialized with them and saw their pathos at first hand. "They're entrepreneurs," he says. "They speak their own language. Like many people engaged in violence, they're sentimental." He tried to talk his way into a daily North Side poker game of petty thieves, which was held in a junk shop owned by a fence called Kenny. "I came out several times, hung out, they didn't want to let me sit down," he says. "Then, one day, I wasn't there. They said, 'Where were you yesterday? We missed you.' I said I was teaching drama at Pontiac Correctional Center. It turned out later that many of them had done time at Pontiac. So they started calling me Teach, and they let me sit down on the game." It was out of this subterranean milieu that Mamet made his first masterpiece, "American Buffalo"—a tale of betrayal cloaked in the comedy of a botched heist, set in a Chicago junk shop. When he handed the script to Mosher, a stripling director just out of Juilliard who was in charge of the Chicago Goodman Theatre's Stage 2, Mosher told him he would read it over the weekend. "You don't need to read it," Mamet said. "Just do it." He paused, then added, "Tell you what. I'll put five grand in escrow, and if the play doesn't win the Pulitzer, keep the money."

MAMET didn't win that year's Pulitzer and never made good on the promise, but "American Buffalo" made his name. It was produced on Broadway in 1977, giving Mamet his first real payday; it was the beginning of

With his wife, Rebecca Pidgeon: Their tranquil life in Vermont gives him the freedom to be uncompromising in his work.

his being able to make a living as a playwright. Though it was only his second full-length play, it was a great leap forward in his storytelling. As late as 1991, Mamet maintained that it was "the most structurally competent" of his plays. "It has the form of a classical tragedy," he said then. As he put it to me recently, "That's the only thing I ever really worked hard at in my life: plotting. Do it and do it, and do it again." He added, "I'm not looking for a feeling—I'm looking for an equation. Given the set of circumstances, what does it end up with? How is that inevitable? How is that surprising?"

What Mamet had excavated from the junk-shop poker games and captured in "American Buffalo" was the notion of a world and an idiom composed of waste. In the swagger of small talk he found a metaphor for the spiritual attrition of American capitalism. His small-fry characters hilariously emulate the badinage of big business. "You know what is free enterprise," says Teach, the punk who kisses himself in on a plan to rob the coin collection of a man who recently paid the junk-shop owner ninety dollars for a nickel. "The freedom of the *Individual*... to Embark on any Fucking Course that he sees fit... in order to secure his honest chance to make a profit.... The country's *founded* on this, Don. You know this."

Mamet's rhythm gave the words and the pauses an unusual emotional clout. "Dave's dialogue is a string of iambs, which can often be broken down into fives," Mosher says. "For example, 'But all I ever ask (and I would say this to her face) is only she remembers who is who and not to go around with *her* or Gracie either with this attitude: The Past is Past, and this is Now, and so Fuck You' is, I believe, twenty-seven iambs in a row." Joe Mantegna, one of Mamet's favorite actors, talks about seeing Mamet "tapping it out with his pen" while actors speak their lines. Sometimes Mamet could be even more insistent. "He sits in the back of the house going, 'Pick up, pick up, pick up!'" Mosher says.

In Mamet's plays, speech becomes

the doing that reveals being; identity is dramatized as each character's struggle to speak his meaning. For instance, Teach, who is full of big plans, can't think clearly. When he makes his sensational entrance cursing "Fuckin' Ruthie," who has insulted him for eating a piece of toast off her plate, we hear a syntax that reels backward like his fearful, scrambled mind:

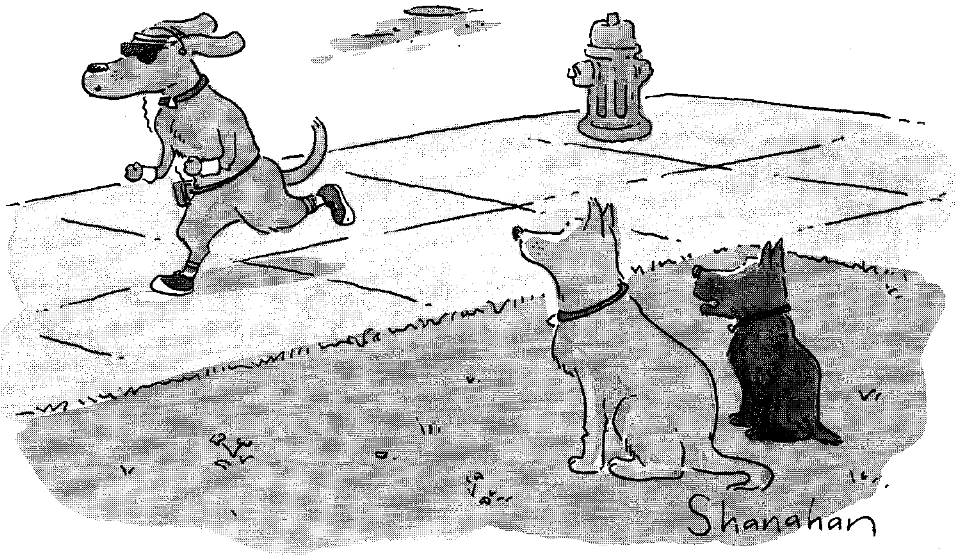
> Only (and I tell you this, Don). Only, and I'm not, I don't think, casting anything on anyone: from the mouth of a Southern bulldyke asshole ingrate of a vicious nowhere cunt can this trash come.

Over the years, so many people have written Mamet to complain about the "language" in his plays that in the eighties he had a form letter printed which read "Too bad, you big cry baby." Once, while talking on the phone in the kitchen to the producer Fred Zollo, Mamet reached into the refrigerator to help his daughter Willa get a Fudgsicle. "Oh, fuck," he said. "Daddy, don't use that language," Willa laughed. Mamet replied, "That language put that fuckin' Fudgsicle in your mouth." In his plays Mamet relishes slang for its impoverished poetry; it helps to create the sense of energy and of absence which his work dissects. In "Sexual Perversity" it's the absence of self-awareness (" 'Cunt' won't do it," Deb says to the inchoate Danny. " 'Fuck' won't do it. No more magic.... Tell me what you're *feeling*. Jerk"); in "American Buffalo" it's the absence of beauty and possibility ("There is nothing out there," Teach says after trashing the shop. "I fuck myself"); in "Glengarry Glen Ross" it's the absence of community and calm ("Fuck *you*. That's my message to you. Fuck you and kiss my ass," Shelly "the Machine" Levene crows at Williamson, the guy who gives out the property leads, after making what he fondly thinks is a sale). Out of the muck of ordinary speech—the curses, interruptions, asides, midsentence breaks, and sudden accelerations—Mamet carefully weaves a tapestry of motifs which he sees as "counterpoint." "The beauty of the fugue comes from the descant, from the counting," he says. "The melody line is pretty damn simple. Anyone can write that." When he composes, Mamet says, he doesn't picture the characters onstage; he hears them. "The rhythms don't just unlock something in the character," he says. "They *are* what's happening."

UNTIL Mamet emerged, American commercial theatre was primarily a literary, naturalistic theatre, where words were a libretto for the actor's emotions, and where the actor determined the rhythms. To be successful, the author had to become invisible. But Mamet brought the author's voice back onto the stage; his ideas about acting protect the author's voice at the expense of the actor's invention. "The words are set and unchanging. Any worth in them was put there by the author," he writes mischievously in "True and False." "If you learn the words by rote, as if they were a phone book, and let them come out of your mouth without your interpretation, the audience will be well served." This is, to say the least, controversial. "It's completely nuts," says the director Karel Reisz, whose films include "Saturday Night and Sunday Morning" and "The French Lieutenant's Woman." "In order to get what you want from the other actor, you have to invent, color, invest it with your own feelings. I think the notion of separating words from actions is very odd; words are part of the action. It's the reason why the shows he directs are so poor. The element of believability is not there; you have the sense of automata reciting the words."

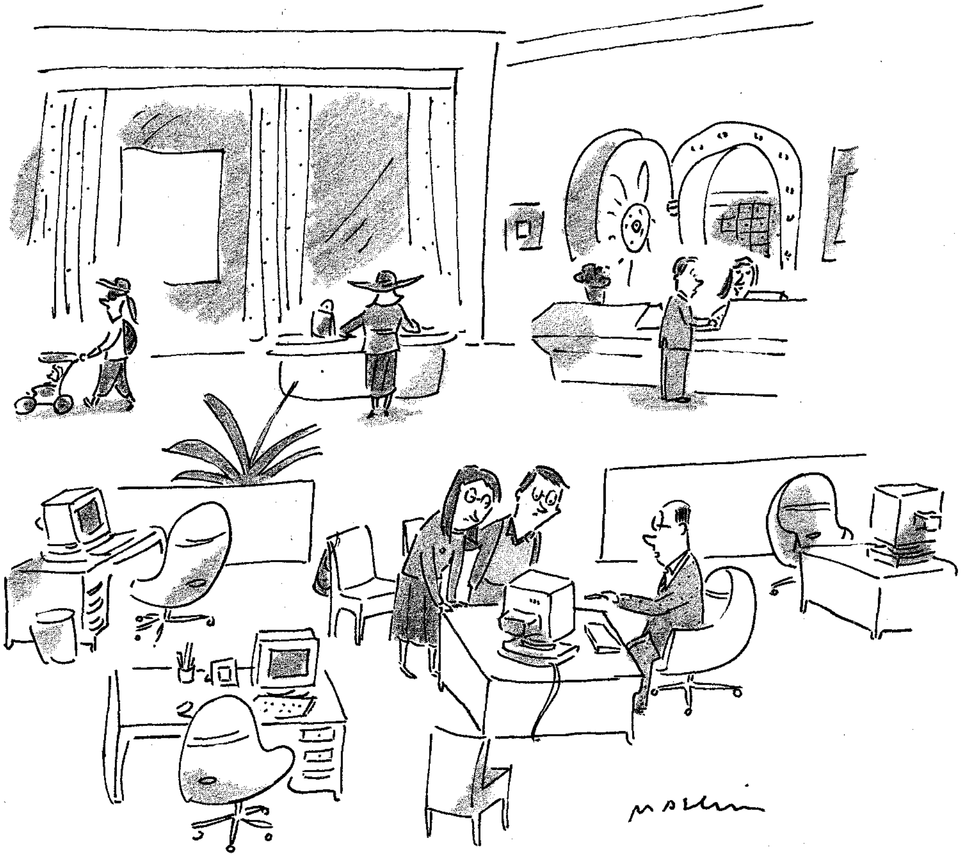
Mamet, like Pinter or Beckett, is perhaps not the best interpreter of his own vision. ("The Cryptogram," for example, was given an excellent English production by Mosher which Mamet did not see, and was directed by Mamet, first in Cambridge and then in New York, without the same impact.) But once he had defined his voice he was determined to defend it. He even traded punches with the actor F. Murray Abraham during the New York production of "Sexual Perversity in Chicago" when Abraham rejected Mamet's tempo in his line readings. "He was like a man on a mission," says Fred Zollo, who met Mamet in those early years and went on to produce most of his major plays as well as many of his films. "I just wanted to be so far ahead," Mamet says. "I didn't want to look back and find somebody gaining on me. If I couldn't write a play, I'd write a movie or I'd write a poem or I'd direct something or I'd teach a class or write a book. I didn't care." He continues, "I ain't gonna go home."

In 1976, Mamet moved to New York, married into show-biz aristocracy—Lindsay Crouse was the daughter of Russel Crouse, who, with his partner Howard Lindsay, wrote such Broadway smash hits as "Life with Father" and "The Sound of Music"—and got down to work. During this period, he began supplementing his playwriting with screenwriting. He got his first assignment through Crouse, who was on her way to audition for Bob Rafelson's 1981 remake of "The Postman Always Rings Twice." He told her to tell Rafelson that "he was a fool if he didn't hire me to write the screenplay," he says. "I was kidding, but she did it." Rafelson called Mamet and asked why he should hire him. "I told



"Still, a brisk walk can be just as effective."

him, ‘Because I’ll give you either a really good screenplay or a sincere apology.’ ” He also wrote “The Verdict,” and by 1982 he was at work on “Glengarry Glen Ross,” which had its début at London’s National Theatre and then went on to become a huge hit on Broadway. Crouse, who starred in such films as “Slap Shot” and “Places in the Heart,” for which she was nominated for an Oscar, “understood the joy and glamour of show biz,” the playwright John Guare says, “and she had integrity.” Guare remembers walking with her in Vermont: “She said to me, ‘Just look at him. Do you realize that this man has made himself? He’s been given no help.’ I understood David’s sense of will through her pride in it. She was so sublimely proud of him—until she wasn’t.” But in the years they were together Crouse was essential to him. “She saw herself as a creative partner, and in some ways she probably was,” Sheila Welch says. She adds, “David wasn’t very smooth socially. Lindsay had social graces. David learned how to present himself in the theatre world from her.” Mamet was now properly seen as well as heard. “That’s why I love the theatre,” a character says in “Edmond.” “Because what you must ask respect for is yourself.” If he hadn’t found the theatre, Mamet has said, “it’s very likely I would have become a criminal—another profession that subsumes the outsider, or, perhaps more to the point, accepts people with a not very well formed ego and rewards the ability to improvise.”



“You see that dark, spooky image on the screen? That’s your credit history coming back to haunt you.”

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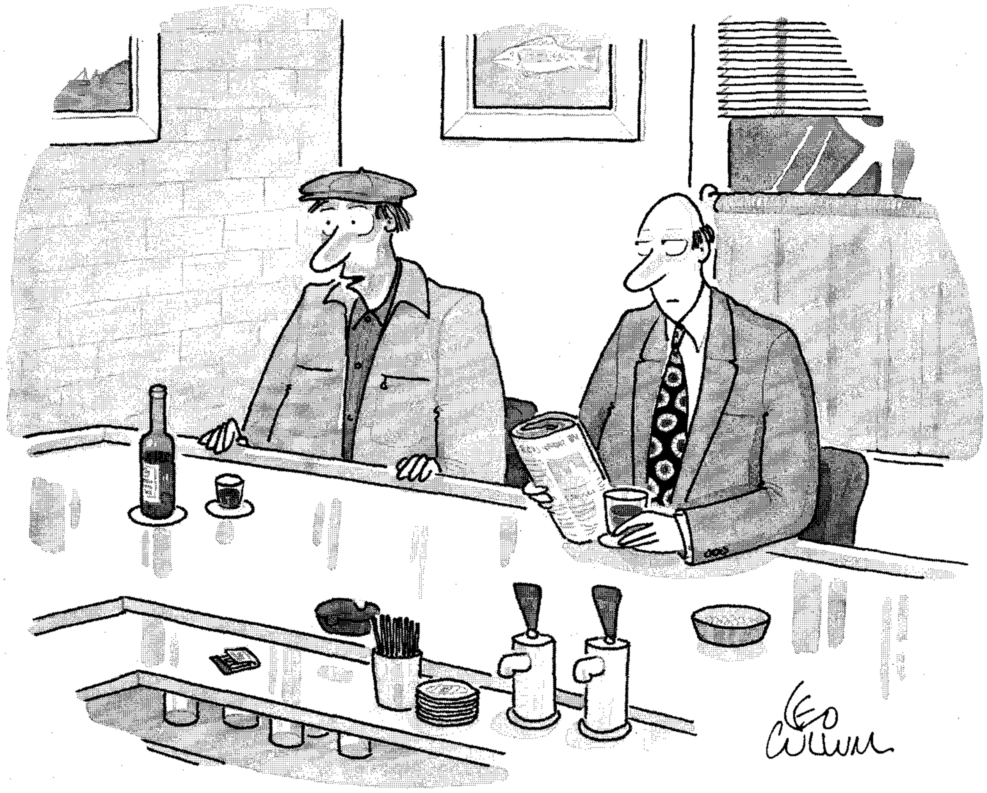
“INJURY has given David enormous energy,” Sidney Lumet, who directed “The Verdict,” says. “I have no idea where it comes from, but there’s a sense of ‘I’ve been screwed.’ A lot of the movies are very much about being had.” In fact, all Mamet’s movies, including the recent crop, and most of his major plays are about betrayal. Many of them revolve around con artists, those picaresque urban hunter-gatherers who scour the postindustrial wasteland in search of both surplus and leisure, and around con games, which give his sense of betrayal a dramatic form. Mamet himself has performed a mentalism act at county fairs, and when he was in college he shilled for his friend Jonathan Katz, then a nationally ranked Ping-Pong champion. “We would stage a game for money between him and me, and I would let him win,” Katz says. “He wouldn’t give me a rematch. I’d get ‘upset,’ but some other guy would give me a rematch, having just seen me beaten by David playing badly.” The magician and master card manipulator Ricky Jay says of Mamet, “He has what a hustler has. He has ‘grift sense.’ It’s what makes his plays work.” In “House of Games” (1987), the first movie that Mamet both wrote and directed, the con illustrates the dilemma of trust. “I ‘used’ you. I did. I’m *sorry*,” Mike, the con man, says to his mark Ford, who has caught him out. “And you learned some *things* about yourself that you’d rather not know.” He continues, “You say I Acted Atrociously. Yes. I did. I do it for a living.” Writers do the same in the service of their story, but with this difference: their lies are like truth. Mamet sees a parallel to the con game in writing for the theatre. The con of performance is to rob the audience not of money but of its preconceived notions. “The trick is leaving out everything except the essential,” Mamet explains. “As Bettelheim says in ‘The Uses of Enchantment,’ the more you leave out, the more we see ourselves in the picture, the more we project our own thoughts onto it.”

The con trick has a still more abiding pull on Mamet’s imagination: it reverses the parental situation. In the con, the public is put in the role of the helpless child, while the con artist is the parent who knows the game and controls all the rules and the information. The whole enterprise is an assertion of omnipotence and a refusal to admit helplessness, which speaks to something deep in Mamet’s nature. At the finale of “House of Games,” Mike is held at gunpoint by Ford, who has shot him twice. Ford says, “Beg me for your life.” But Mike, a con man to the last, won’t. He’d rather die than be infantilized and surrender his sense of autonomy. Ford



"I rolled my pension over and over and over, and now I have no idea where the hell it is."

shoots him again. "Thank you, sir, may I have another?" Mike says as Ford fires three more shots into him. In real life, Mamet also controls the rules of his game: he is the agent of all action, all answers, all interpretation. Even Mamet's instructions to actors, which demystify the notion of character ("There *is* no character. There are only lines upon a page"), are a way of insuring that the play's meaning and invention stay with him. "He controls the actors with an iron hand, in the rhythms and little quarter words and half words and stammers," Mike Nichols, who uses Mamet's work in his acting classes, says. "He says *'You vill do vhat I say!'* more than any writer that's ever written for the theatre, with the possible exceptions of Lillian Hellman and Pinter. For the actor to force his life through this iron control leads to such exciting things." It can also sometimes flatten and dehumanize performances, as it did Lindsay Crouse's in "House of Games." But as a film director Mamet has progressed from that static, unsure first effort, which one critic accurately observed was shot "like an Army training film," to the fluid, well-paced achievement of "The Spanish Prisoner," in which a con trick played on a credulous company man becomes a moral lesson about how the getting of wisdom equals the getting of skepticism.

ABOUT every eighteen months, Mamet likes to direct a movie. "When I'm making a movie, I'm just about as happy as I can be," he says. "I'm playing doll house with my best friends in the world." He oversees these occasions with patriarchal good humor and consideration. "He's an embarrassingly stand-up guy," the producer Art Linson says. "He expects nothing from people. So when somebody does something, the slightest gesture, he's truly moved." Every night after shooting, Mamet goes among the crew and thanks each member personally. His sets are exceptional for their congeniality. "I've had many happy movie experiences, but that one was right up there at the top," Steve Martin says about playing the heavy in "The Spanish Prisoner." Mamet keeps a joke reel of each film, which is to say a partial record of his practical jokes. On the first day of "The Spanish Prisoner," for instance, he laid out for the actress Felicity Huffman a Brünnhilde costume, complete with horned helmet. Once, during the shooting of "Oleanna," he asked William Macy to learn a new full-page speech on the spur of the moment and he put it on cue cards for the take. "I start the speech," Macy recalls. "I do the first card. I get to the second card, and it reads, 'But what do I know? I'm just a dumb towheaded cracker from Georgia. You know, when Dave first picked me out of the gutter . . .' "

Of course, Mamet has less fun being a hired hand on other people's Hollywood projects. "Being a writer out there is like going into Hitler's Eagle's Nest with a great idea for a bar-mitzvah festival," he says. His streamlined screenplays, which have no embellishments or explanations, are not studio-executive-friendly. "They're dry sponges waiting for the water of performance," Sidney Lumet says. "And that's when they swell up to five thousand per cent." Mamet's script for "The Verdict" had been forgotten by the producers, who had spent more than a million dollars in development, but Lumet read Mamet's early version and said it was the one he wanted to shoot. Likewise, Paramount was indifferent to Linson's notion of going after Mamet to write "The Untouchables." A cartoon of their first meeting, in 1984, is pinned on the wall of Mamet's cabin, with Linson giving his pitch: "Dave, don't you think that the best career move for someone who'd just won the Pulitzer Prize would be to adapt 'The Untouchables' for a *shitload* of money?" Mamet's screenplay departed from the TV series, and, inevitably, the executives didn't like it. Nonetheless, when it was filmed by Brian De Palma it grossed over two hundred million dollars worldwide and gave Mamet considerable heat in the industry.

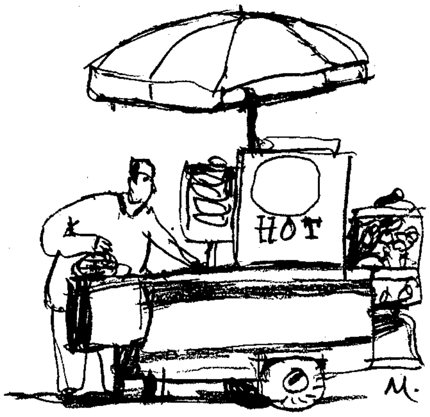
Actually, Mamet's minimalism and his notion of character suits screenwriting. He works up his story on file cards. "You know the movie's ready to be written when you can remember it," Mamet says. "When the progression of incidents is so clear that you no longer need the cards, then you're ready to write." He writes very fast. "He wrote the first draft of 'The Untouchables' in what seemed like ten days or less," Linson recalls. "He has occasionally turned a script in to me and said, 'Could you please sit on it for a couple of weeks? I don't want them to think it's this easy.' Dead true. Once Dave gets something, it just kind of writes itself." Rewriting Mamet is very difficult. "It looks like somebody put a patch on a pair of Levi's," Linson says, and, though Mamet will accept notes and supply rewrites, "there'll come a time where the gate comes down and it's '*No más*.' "

Mamet's talent and his inflexibility have given him something of a bad-boy reputation in Hollywood, whose folly he memorialized in "Speed-the-Plow." "I find that a smile and a hearty 'Fuck you' does the trick," he says of seeing off the intrusive suggestions of movie executives. Sometimes even his own producers get it in the neck. Mamet once handed Zollo a copy of "American Buffalo" to do as a movie. "Have you adapted it for the screen?" Zollo asked. "Adapted it?" said Mamet. "Have I fucking what? I'm going to adapt it right now for you." Mamet demanded the script back. "He crosses out 'A Play by David Mamet' and he writes 'A Screenplay by David Mamet,' " Zollo says. Mamet is fortified in his truculence by the lesson of his poker playing ("If you're smarter than the other guy, be smarter than the other guy") and by a favorite dictum of the English critic William Hazlitt, which he paraphrases as "Don't try to suck up or even be nice to your intellectual inferiors. They'll only hate you more for it." He adds, "Having read that makes my life a little bit easier." About two years ago, Bob Conte, of HBO, gave Zollo a few pages of notes to give to Mamet on his "Lansky" script, which is finally being produced this year. "Essentially, almost all of our notes concern the following issues: Chronology, Clarity, and Character (alliteration unintended)," Conte wrote. "Tell him to Suck My Dick," Mamet told Zollo. "Alliteration unintended."

MAMET'S life as an uncompromising writer/director seems in direct contrast to—and is probably made possible by—the tranquillity of his surroundings. In Vermont, he lives in a converted farmhouse, originally built in 1805, that sits on the rise of a hill and looks down a sloping meadow onto a large beaver pond. There are deer, bear, and moose in the surrounding forests, where Mamet likes to walk and sometimes hunt—or, as he says, "take my gun for a walk." He never shoots anything. "My wife calls me the Deer Protection Association," he says. If he gets in his Land Rover, a gift from Linson for a week's rewrite, he can be at Goddard College in fifteen minutes; if he gets on his mountain bike, as he does with Rebecca several times a week to go into town for the mail, Cabot is less than four miles of hard pedalling away. Mamet's kingdom consists of the farmhouse, a red barn, and a cedar cabin whose shingled roof is tucked under the bough of a pine tree about a hundred and fifty yards from the house.

Onto this rough-hewn masculine landscape Rebecca Pidgeon has put her graceful mark: red, white, and pink hollyhocks press up against the fence posts; under the kitchen window, she has planted an array of herbs among rows of rhubarb, spinach, and lettuce, which Mamet looks upon with the kind of wonder that Jack had for the beanstalk. "After roses, it's all broccoli to me," he says. Mamet's admiration for his wife's competence and for her attentiveness to the world around her is transparent and touching. "She's had a tremendous effect in anchoring him, in calming him down, in making him feel it's O.K. to be scared, it's O.K. to be upset, it's O.K. to fail," Lynn Mamet says. "There's nothing self-destructive about her. She's healthy. And I think it's allowed my brother to exhale for the first time in his life."

Mamet first laid eyes on Pidgeon, who is nineteen years younger than he is, at National Theatre rehearsals in London for a 1989 production of "Speed-the-Plow," in which she was playing the tenacious, idealistic secretary who almost succeeds in making the producing goniff do good. "He came up to her and said, 'You know, I always wanted to meet a girl like that,' " the actor Colin Stinton, who played opposite Pidgeon, recalls. "She blushed and was sort of flattered by it, I think." Pidgeon, who had her own rock band in addition to her acting career, was resourceful, straightforward, and beautiful; and she didn't bore him. "You think she likes me?" Mamet badgered the painter Donald Sultan, with whom he had travelled to London. Sultan explains, "I said, 'Yeah, I think she likes you.' He said, 'What makes you think that?' I said, 'Well, every day for the last six months, every thought, every word, every action has been yours. How could she not like you?' " Pidgeon herself was surprised that she did. She says, "I had imagined him as this old, tall, very intellectual, cold, godlike kind of writer, and then I see this young, vibrant kind of street urchin. I thought, How could this be possible?" In the meantime, Mamet called his sister from London. "He said, 'I've found her,' " Lynn Mamet says. "He told me about her. I said, 'So, you'll marry her.' He went on for months, driving me crazy. 'She's in London, I'm here; she's got this career, I'm here; she's eleven, I'm here.' "



After a two-year long-distance courtship, they married; Mamet had found his bliss and a new mellowness. Zollo was surprised when Mamet agreed in 1994 to let him mount "The Cryptogram," which he had kept in his trunk since the late seventies because of its intensely personal material. "He felt safe in his life," Zollo says, by way of explanation. Pidgeon says, "We're extremely compatible. There's no 'I'm going off to be a genius and be troublesome and mysterious and worried.' We have a very peaceful life." Contentment seems to have opened Mamet up even in literary ways. "I think his women's writing has improved since his marriage to Rebecca," Lynn says—a statement borne out by the complex rewrite of the mother's role in "The Cryptogram," and by the corporate femme fatale in "The Spanish Prisoner," a part well played by Pidgeon. Lynn goes on, "I don't think David has written a lot for women because I don't think he's been around that many women to whom he wishes to listen, and therefore replicate their voices."

Rebecca and Clara go down through the meadow to hunt for frogs at the beaver pond, and Mamet heads for the cabin. "I've never been anything other than happy here," he says as we approach the porch, whose left side is piled high with firewood. In the winter, when it can get to forty below and the snow is deep, Mamet makes the trek in snowshoes. When he arrives, his ink is frozen, so he improvises a trivet out of pie plates, putting pencils under the ink bottle and warming it up on the black Glenwood's parlor stove that dominates the front half of the room. There is an exhilarating sense of containment and comfort here, where Mamet's cherished objects are arranged carefully around him: a canoe paddle with a beautifully painted pike on its blade hangs on the beam separating the writing area from the reading area; there's a dartboard, a skeet thrower, a collection of campaign buttons, a .58 muzzleloader, a nine-pound medicine ball, and bookcases full of outdoor reading like "The Parker Gun Shooter's Bible Treasury" and "Black Powder Gun Digest." It's as if, instead of with the stove, Mamet were keeping himself warm with the things he loves. "Being a writer is all so ethereal that I think most of us tend to surround ourselves with tchotchkes so we can actually be sure we have a past," he says. "Or a life."

Mamet types with his back to the window on a blue Olympia manual typewriter, above which a kerosene lamp is suspended by a chain from a beam smudged black with smoke. The special calm of the place is in part the peace of having no electricity; it is also the peace of the activity that goes on there. Writing has always been Mamet's way of containing terror, or what he calls "mental vomit." "David's brain is a very busy place. It's very cluttered," Lynn Mamet says. "Writing's the only thing that stops the thinking, you know," Mamet says. "It stops all that terrible nonsense noise that's in there." In "The Edge," where the billionaire bookworm thinks himself out of the backwoods, Mamet quite literally shows the triumph of thought over terror. It's something that he clearly works hard at in his own life. Across the room, on a table in front of the sofa, his serious reading is laid out: D. W. Winnicott's "Thinking About Children"; a special Hebrew prayer about "the good wife," whose twenty-two verses are traditionally read by the husband to his wife on holy days; and Seneca's "Letters from a Stoic." Mamet has underlined only one passage in Seneca: "Each day . . . acquire something which will help you to face poverty, or death, and other ills as well."

When Mamet set out on his theatrical journey, the teachings of the Stoics emboldened him. "The stoical motto is 'What hinders you?' " he explains. "I'd like to be able to write clearer. 'What's stopping you?' I'd like to be able to figure a project out. 'What's stopping you?' I mean, let's say Sophocles took eighteen years to write 'Oedipus Rex.' It's not under your control how quickly you complete 'Oedipus Rex,' but it is under your control whether or not you give up." He adds, "It doesn't have to be calm and clear-eyed. You just have to not give up."

A heron lands on top of a sixty-foot tamarack tree that towers on the ridge above where Rebecca and Clara are starting back up the hill. Mamet studies it through the window, then walks over to his desk looking for his camera. Taped there is a blue file card with a snatch of dialogue on it, which I bend close to read. "Here, take it," Mamet says and hurries me into the bright day with his camera in hand. Clara and Rebecca are skipping up the path; Clara is clutching a heron's feather. Mamet darts around them trying to capture the scene. Clara drops her feather; Mamet stoops down to pick it up. Clara's hand touches the top of his bristly head. It's a fragile moment, whose mysterious joy sends him glancing up to see it reflected in his wife's eyes. In his high-school yearbook, to print beside his nerdy photograph, Mamet had chosen the quotation "And so make life and that vast forever one grand, sweet song." He seems somehow to have lived up to his early romantic plan, even if his song is a fierce, rueful, sometimes cruel one. Just how his talent and his life have come together so well seems, like all blessings, both miraculous and inexplicable. I glanced at the file card in my hand:

A) *Life*, maan . . .
B) . . . life.
A) It is so crazy—let me tell you: if you saw it in a movie, you would not believe it. You know why? BECAUSE IT HAS NO PLOT. ♦

AT THE GALLERIES

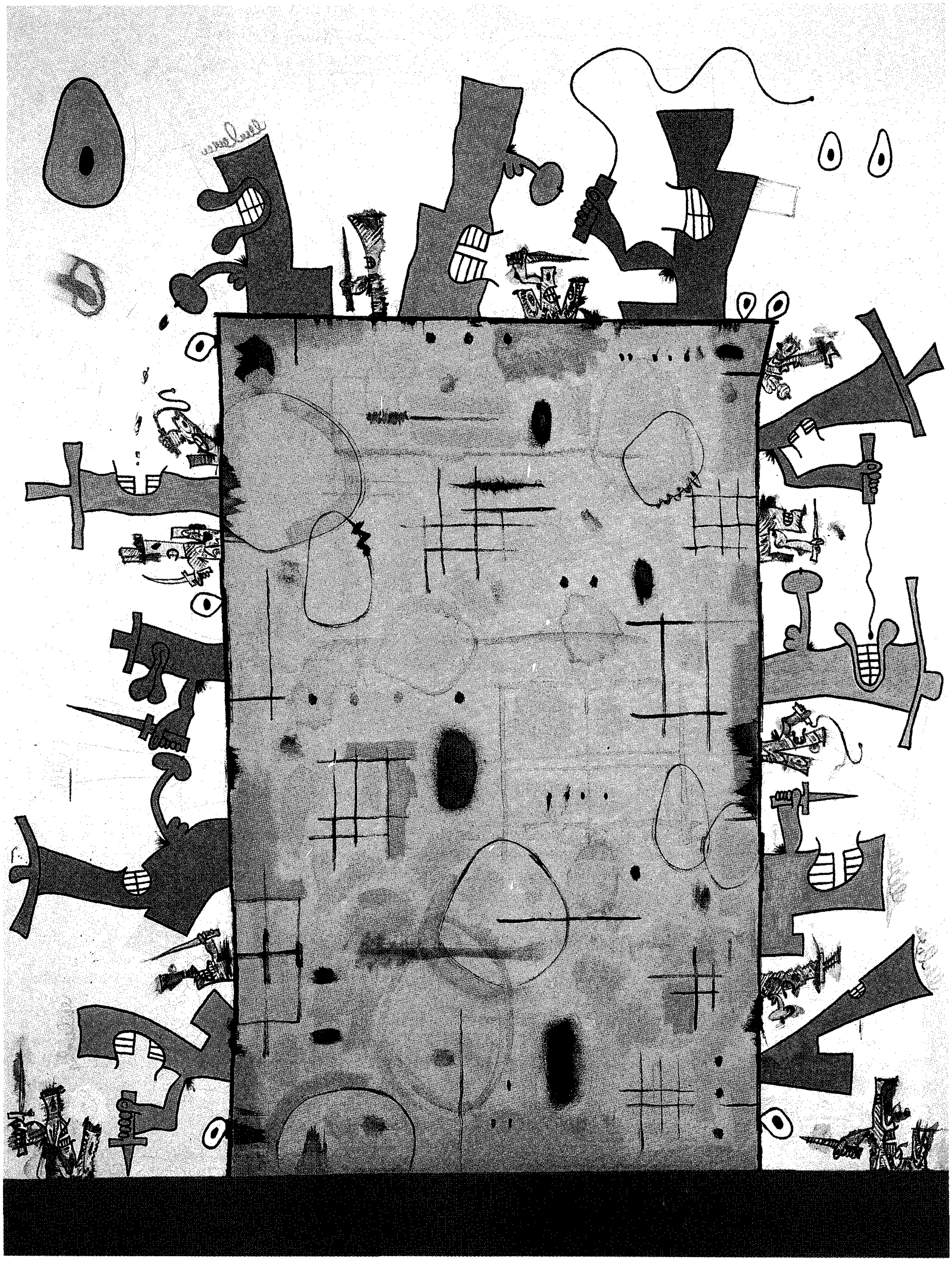
NASTY PICTURES

PAINTING is the Freddy Krueger of art mediums: pronounced dead again and again, it keeps rising from the grave for yet another sequel. So perhaps it's appropriate that some of the liveliest examples (and some of the most influential) should appear, like Frankenstein's monster, as an unruly amalgam of dead elements. That's certainly the case with Carroll Dunham's new paintings, which, for all the seeming crudeness of their imagery, are steeped in contemporary art history. Hints of Willem de Kooning, Philip Guston, and Cy Twombly percolate in Dunham's canvases, yet they're in no sense wan salon pictures, richly but pointlessly allusive; on the contrary, their energetic vulgarity is unsettling.

Dunham's work belongs to a broad stream of recent painting that attempts to reconcile the competing claims of abstraction and representation. Although his earlier canvases tended more toward the former, his new works explicitly take up the vocabulary of cartoons and graffiti. The overriding influence is probably Guston, the first-generation Abstract Expressionist who, late in his career, abruptly abandoned the lyrical style of his youth for a heavy-handed representational mode of creepy signature motifs—in particular, hooded Klansmen, the ancestors of Dunham's angry homunculi.

"Demon Tower" (1997), part of Dunham's latest group (on view at Metro Pictures, in Chelsea, through November 15th), pulses with hysteria. The artist has a knack for aggressively inelegant color combinations—in this case, Pepto-Bismol pink, poisonous yellow, and manurial brown. The rectangle of the tower is a kind of surrogate abstract painting, in which vestigial grids jostle mammary biomorphs. The little demons themselves are arresting comic inventions, peeing and wielding knives, their toothy mouths exploding with silent invective. Several of them are equipped with bloated, ridiculous phalli. In Dunham's hands, the face of contemporary painting may not be pretty, but it's vividly, nastily alive.

—DAVID RIMANELLI



FICTION

SONNY LISTON WAS A FRIEND OF MINE

The Kid does good.

BY THOM JONES

FILIP PAGOWSKI

SUNDAY services at St. Paul's Lutheran, when Communion was offered, were very long affairs. Sit down, get up, sit down again—in a flesh-eating wool suit as voracious as a blanket of South American army ants. If the tedium didn't kill you, the everlasting sermon might. Then there were the hymns, six or seven of them, and the old women, becoming primal, howled like coyotes. There were babies screaming, and stagnant air, and the stupefying body heat, and the weight of his own sins. "Yeah, Jesus, you can do me a favor: *shut that fucking kid up*, will ya?" For Kid Dynamite, it was beyond harrowing; it was Hell on earth. He endured it because—why? Because he had no choice. And, besides, Mag, his German grandmother—five foot two, debilitated by diabetes and rheumatoid arthritis, and as old as the century—wanted him there. It was the only time she left the store. But what a relief to be done with it.

As soon as his mother's turquoise Impala pulled into the driveway with everyone crushed inside, Kid Dynamite was out of the back seat and across the lawn: one, two, three, four steps up to the front door and he was in the house and dancing out of his wool pants and tie and putting on his cotton sweatpants and boxing shoes. He wrapped his hands, slipped a hooded sweatshirt over his head, and was down the back stairs and out of the house. Out. Clean. Gone.

It was early March and the wind was blowing hard; it had been raining off and on. His "gym" was Cancer Frank's garage. Cancer Frank was Kid Dynamite's stepfather—in his gray sharkskin and brown felt snap-brim and with the ever-present Pall Mall hanging from his lips, the Hoagy Carmichael of Aurora, Illinois. He was a Chevrolet salesman, and always had a new dealer's model, but he never parked it in the garage, which appeared on the verge of collapse. Three of its windows were broken and the roof leaked, but the floor was made of smooth wooden planks. Kid Dynamite did some side twists in front of a mirror to limber up.

He wasn't bad-looking, but what Kid Dynamite liked most about himself was his face and the badges of honor which he, still only seventeen years old, had earned in the ring—scar tissue along the eyes, a cauliflower ear, a realigned nose. He threw a jab at the double-ended bolo bag and gave it a quick head slip when it bounced back. Slipping punches was the most accomplished method for a boxer to protect his face. Kid Dynamite continued slipping punches until he felt sweat forming on his face. Then he started moving in and out on the bag—using his legs. In another few moments he was gliding around the greasy floor planks, the air so cold he could see his breath. He cherished his Sunday-afternoon workouts. He was alone and could concentrate on his upcoming fight on Tuesday, the biggest fight of his life. His father had been a boxer. He once told him, "There are twenty thousand things that can go wrong in a fight, and how many of them can you think of—fifty?" Kid Dynamite devoted himself to problem-solving, trying to imagine every way he could find to win.

The Crests were on the radio singing "Sixteen Candles." Kid Dynamite had expected an afternoon of "suck" radio, but he liked the song, Melanie's favorite. Melanie was his girlfriend, the only girlfriend he'd had. Kid Dynamite kicked into a higher gear. He was working hard now, gliding around the floor with his hands carried high at the sides of his head. The plank floor creaked as he moved in and out on the bolo bag. It rebounded with such speed that he had to concentrate intently to avoid having it slap him in the face. He had flunked geometry, which was ironic. Boxing was calculating angles. The angles of the ring Kid Dynamite understood perfectly.

At a hundred and forty-seven pounds, Kid Dynamite was a welterweight. He had just reached the finals in the open class of the Chicago Golden Gloves, but it hadn't been easy. Two of the victories that got him there had been split decisions. In the last one, on Friday, he suffered a slight cut under his left eye. Kid Dynamite was from the suburbs of Chicago. Fifteen kids from his gym, the Steelworkers' Hall, had entered the competition; by Friday only three remained. Juan, their coach, drove the two back after the last fight in his junky-ass Cadillac, all of them sky high and singing along to WLS radio on the Eisenhower Expressway. When he got home, Kid Dynamite found only Cancer Frank still up—lying on the couch watching TV. So he went upstairs and woke up his mother. "I won. I got him good," he said.

Her face was covered in a luminescent green mask. "Did you knock him out?" she said wearily. There was a bath towel on her pillow.

"My guy? No, I won on points. Chubby knocked his guy out. I won on points. But I was feeling so right tonight. It was the best thing. I'm going to win the tournament."

"Your father used to talk like that," his mother said as flecks of cracked green paste fell from her face. "You sound just like him. And he's in the nuthouse now—with his brains half knocked out."

"You look like a talking vegetable with that crap on your face. Can't you just say 'Good, I'm glad you won.' Is that too much?"

His mother stuck her hand out, groping for the alarm clock. "I've got to get up at the crack of dawn. What time is it?" she said.

"Midnight," he said, and stalked out of the room. He flipped on the bathroom light and looked at the cut under his eye. It wasn't that bad, but the tissue under his eye was swollen and tender. He went downstairs and got an ice cube, passing Cancer Frank on the stairs without uttering a word. Later, while lying in bed, Kid Dynamite could hear Cancer Frank talking to his mother. He was telling her that the Kid didn't really have a chance. "He'll never get past the next round. He drew Louie Reine, the redhead that beat him up last year."

"He sure thinks he's going to win," he could hear his mother saying.

Cancer Frank said, "Not even if you tied one of Reine's hands behind his back does he win."

Kid Dynamite waited in the silence of the night for his mother to defend him. He heard Cancer Frank's heavy feet padding into the bathroom. He took a long horse piss into the toilet and gargled some Listerine. In a moment he was back in the bedroom. "I don't know," he heard his mother saying. "He was in the paper again, fifteen in a row this time. Knocking them out left and right."

"Those were prelims. Kids who don't know how to fight." Cancer Frank spoke matter-of-factly, without rancor or malice. "This other fighter, Reine, has his number. The kid is scared. He isn't going to win. He'll blow it."

KID DYNAMITE had boxed Reine beautifully for two rounds the year before. The Kid had fast hands. Hands that could hit Reine at will. Juan, his coach, was the problem. Even though Reine was clearly out of gas after the second round, Juan told the Kid to stay on the outside and box the man: "Take this one on points." So he boxed at long range. Then, as Reine recovered his wind, Kid Dynamite slipped and got clocked.

This year Kid Dynamite was in shape, but he didn't actually have a new plan. He knew he should last the fight. He was stronger than he had been the year before. But Louis Reine was now being touted in the Chicago *Sun-Times* as the premier fighter of the tournament. At eighteen, he had won forty-two fights and lost none. He had been fighting stiffer competition from the South Side, and the paper said he was likely to go all the way to the Nationals.

Kid Dynamite *had* lost fights—seventeen losses in all. He had also got his ass kicked in a half-dozen street fights. He had been knocked cold seven times. Hospitalized twice. After the loss last year to Reine, the Kid's doctor tried to persuade his mother to make him quit boxing entirely. But Kid Dynamite had had the fight with Reine in the palm of his hand, and he knew it. More often than not, after a fighter took a single solid beating, he did not come back to the gym. Or if he did he wasn't the same. He was gun-shy. The test was to come back with burning desire, which Kid Dynamite had done. He had not lost a fight since. He tried to explain this to his girlfriend the day after he lost to Reine.

Melanie, a tall brunette with perfect posture, stood with her ankles together waiting for him. Light snowflakes fell on her shiny hair. She had high cheekbones and full lips. Melanie was thin, but Kid Dynamite liked that. The Kid had a sore neck, a broken nose, a black eye, and swollen purple lips. He didn't understand why his girlfriend was crying; he was already looking so much better than he had in the ring. "It's not as bad as it looks," he said. "I'm just sore."

Melanie approached him, reaching out to touch his cheek with a fuzzy woollen glove. She wanted him to stop boxing. She believed he could do other things—go to college, a real college, like Northwestern, where she'd be going next year—but he knew he had to keep boxing, knew he couldn't quit now. He didn't know how or why.

"He hit me so hard every tooth in my mouth rattled," he said. "But with you standing here in front of me, I'm an ace."

He kissed her neck. He could feel an erection coming on and tried to back away, but she clutched him tighter. He gave in and let her hold him completely. Students were walking by, the late ones. He felt her tears rolling down his neck.

"Baby, my ribs, careful!" he said.

Both sides of North Avenue were lined with oak and maples, barren of leaves. It was a gray morning, and the snow was fouled by the black smoke of coal fires from the chimneys of the homes along the avenue. Kid Dynamite stepped into a yard and snapped a small branch from a pussy willow, the first sign that winter was breaking. He rubbed a furry blossom at the edges of Melanie's mouth. "Tickle?" he said, tracing the tears rolling from her face.

She wiped a wisp of tear-drenched hair from her face.

"Let's skip school," she said. "My parents are at work. We can go back to my place."

MELANIE'S parents were both cops. Her stepfather, Verne, had been a boxer himself, a heavyweight from New Jersey who fought in club fights as a teen-ager. He still followed the sport and took an interest in Kid Dynamite's career. Shortly after Melanie and the Kid started going out, Verne drove them both out past the North Aurora Downs Racetrack to watch Sonny Liston train for the first Patterson fight at Comiskey Park. Verne shelled out twelve bucks to get into the old Pavilion dance hall where a gym had been set up. Kid Dynamite had never actually been inside before, but he'd heard about it endlessly. His father used to fight here, before the Second World War. He caused a sensation in Depression-era Aurora when he beat Foster Web and Spider James, who were both world-class ranked fighters.

There were few spectators in the Pavilion. Verne led them to some front-row padded loge seats. The world's No. 1 was already in the ring, working out with a fast light heavyweight. Liston was big, and his size made him seem as ponderous as a water buffalo, but in fact he was just as fast as his sparring partner, probably faster. Liston was working on cutting off the ring, something he anticipated having to do with Patterson. Time and again Liston trapped his sparring partner along the ropes, threw light punches, then let him go only to trap him again.

There were a number of handlers in gray "Sonny Liston" sweatshirts; one sat in front of a small phonograph and played "Night Train" over and over again. Kid Dynamite had two fresh black eyes—his doctor had just rebroken his nose to set it right—and he could tell that people were staring at him. He felt conspicuous, a little uncomfortable.

Liston's second sparring partner was a bigger man. But at the first exchange Liston knocked him down with a single body shot. It didn't look like much of

"Yes, Jamie—you have an insight?"

• •

a punch, but the pain was very real. The boxer writhed about the canvas in agony. He couldn't continue. Disgusted, and out of sparring partners, Liston climbed out of the ring and began banging the heavy bag.

The world of professional fighting seemed incomprehensible to Kid Dynamite, after watching only high-school fighters. He was amazed at Liston's speed and the compactness and economy of his movements. He had a left jab that seemed capable of decapitating anyone with less than a seventeen-inch neck. His display on the big bag was frightening, was beyond what Kid Dynamite imagined possible. Verne gave him a nudge and said, "Bet the farm on this man. Patterson is dead."

As the workout ran down, Liston gave a rope-skipping exhibition, the rope echoing loudly off the solid-maple floor of the dance hall. Liston was doing double crossovers with the skip rope. Kid Dynamite looked to the fighter's feet, and when he looked back up he discovered Liston's baleful stare was locked in on him. The Kid met the gaze, but then couldn't sustain it. He looked at Liston's forehead. His chin. Then, when he looked back at the eyes, Liston gave him the slightest hint of a smile and winked. Verne nudged Kid Dynamite again and leaned over, whispering, "Your eyes. He's looking at your eyes."

Kid Dynamite had forgotten about his black eyes. Verne laughed and said, "I almost shit in my pants before I figured it out. That is one mean nigger."

The workout concluded, and a handler tossed Sonny Liston a towel. He mopped off his face. Another handler helped him into a terry-cloth robe and then cut off his bandages. Liston's hands were like hams. The man in the gray "Sonny Liston" sweatshirt continued to play "Night Train" over and over again. Most of the people there were reporters, jotting notes on press pads. Kid Dynamite heard a *Life* magazine reporter being told that during training Liston ate nothing but rare steak, carrot juice, goat's milk, and vegetables. The handler wanted to impress upon the reporter that Liston was the only person in America to own a carrot juicer.

On his way to the shower, Liston stopped just short of Kid Dynamite to sign a few autographs. He paused to talk with the sportswriters and then looked back at Kid Dynamite. He said, "What are you, kid, a lightweight?"

Kid Dynamite replied like a shot—"No, sir, I'm a welterweight"—but his voice squeaked.

In a hilarious sissy voice, Liston mimicked, "No, sir, I'm a welterweight."

The writers roared, and Kid Dynamite's cheeks flushed. Sonny Liston motioned to one of the handlers, who handed him an eight-by-ten black-and-white glossy. He said, "What's your name?"

Kid Dynamite froze. Finally he said, "Make it out to Melanie."

"I thought you was going to hem and haw forever." Liston looked at Melanie. "Is that you?"

"Yes," she said.

"Looks like you thumped him pretty good," Liston said. There was another roar of laughter. A press photographer rushed over and took a picture of the four of them—Liston, Melanie, Verne, and Kid Dynamite. In the end, Liston signed a picture for each of them. As soon as the fighter turned away, a man in a gray sweatshirt demanded two dollars each for the photographs. Verne paid gladly enough. "That was nice. He didn't have to do that."

Giddy with excitement, they compared inscriptions. Kid Dynamite's photo was signed "To the Kid, your friend, Sonny Liston." Kid Dynamite beamed at the inscription as if it were the writ of God: "Sonny Liston is a friend of mine."

KID DYNAMITE had had the fight with Reine in the palm of his hand. He repeated that to himself over and over. He wasn't going to give up. He wanted vengeance. He applied himself to his sport with renewed vigor. He arrived an hour early for his summer job as a lifeguard so that he could swim before work—and that was after he had already completed a full morning workout in the garage. He bought a set of Joe Weider weights. He did extra neck bridges, and ran five miles before even reaching the pool.

After work Kid Dynamite met Melanie at Pike's Dairybar, across the field from his house. Melanie served ice cream there in a blue-striped seersucker frock. One night after closing, they sat outside under the blue bug zapper. Melanie was an only child and, like Kid Dynamite, had been raised by a stepfather, although she didn't know her own father at all.

"Maybe it's just as well," Kid said. "Verne is really nice. My real father was nice, but he just wasn't around much. He used to take me to the gym when I was a kid. He thought I was a sissy. He took me to Chicago, and I met Joe Louis, Ezzard Charles—guys who were his actual friends. That's how it all started. I was eight or nine, and I was already in the Silver Gloves—boxing for little kids. Boxing just became the thing I do, I guess. I don't know what I'll do when it's all over. I'm not good at anything else."

As always, Melanie protested that this wasn't so. She had a different picture of the Kid's prospects.

"My father was in the war when I was born," he continued. "He left my mother as soon as he got back from Germany. One time he was supposed to show up to take me to this father-and-son dinner at school. The catcher for the Cubs was the guest speaker. But my father didn't show. Finally I gave up on him and changed my clothes. I remember feeling—well, nothing. It was, like, so what? Then I recall kneeling down in the field over there. I had a model airplane and was trying to get it started, and suddenly I had this awful feeling of desolation. And that was when he appeared, heavy liquor on his breath, still wanting to go to the dinner. I got dressed and we went. Everyone had finished eating, and a waitress got us some food. Why was I so proud of my father? I should probably hate him. He's in a mental institution now in Oregon. Calls up sometimes. Collect calls at three in the morning."

"What does he say?"

"He had a conversation with a Rice Krispies box. Snap, Crackle, and Pop."

"No, he didn't. Really. What does he talk about?"

"Oh, I don't know. He talks about sex a lot. Insane shit. Does your mother ever talk about your real father?"

"No. I don't ask. Verne is my dad. I don't know the other person."

"Your sire," Kid said.

"Sire?"

"That's your biological father."

"And I'm the one who gets A's in English."

"Yeah, but I'm not smart enough to get into Northwestern, like you. I'll be lucky to get into Northern."

"We'll still see each other. It's not far."

"Yeah. Maybe."

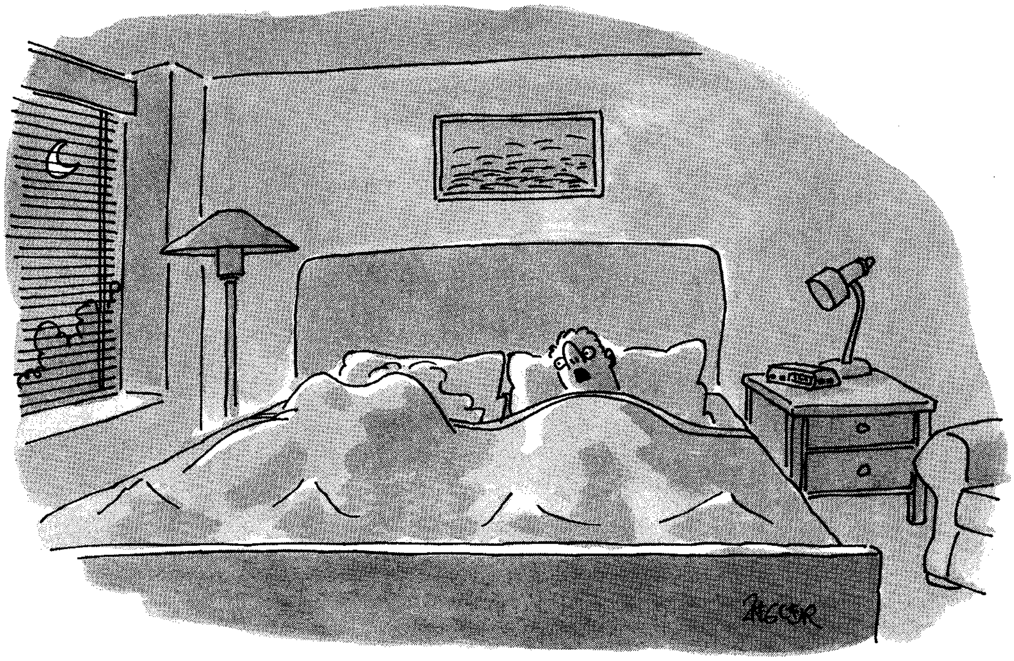
The Monday morning before the fight, Kid Dynamite awoke at four, ready and full of anticipation. This would be the last run before the Reine fight. One more solid run. Then he'd taper off. He wanted to go in well rested. On the edge of his bed, he clocked his resting pulse. Forty beats a minute. If he lost, it would be because Reine was the better fighter. One more big run and he was ready.

Kid Dynamite got into his sweats and combat boots, walked quietly downstairs and out the door, and fell into an easy jog across town to his grandmother's store. Since North Avenue was lit with orange tungsten street lights, it was the route of choice; this was no time to sprain an ankle in a dark pothole.

Kid Dynamite picked up speed after the first mile. He passed the Burlington railroad station and spotted commuters scouting parking spots for the trip to Chicago. As he crossed the Fox River bridge, a squad car passed and a cop waved at him. Kid Dynamite ran past the gas company and the factories. The men inside were finishing the graveyard shift. He had come to recognize many of them. How could they stand in front of a machine—a spot welder or a punch press—night after night? Kid Dynamite knew that he might end up in such a place himself. He was not college material, and he knew enough about boxing to know that his prospects as a professional fighter were nil, just as they had been, ultimately, for his father, who had called last night and was much on the Kid's mind. He came down the hill, passed under the viaduct, and sprinted the last two blocks to Mag's store.

Mag was standing at the cash register in the dark, counting out bills in her broken English. For the past few years, Kid Dynamite had been coming in to do the heavy lifting for her—moving cases up from the basement, shuffling milk and pop bottles, sacks of flour, bags of potatoes. This morning he loaded the stove with coal and then joined Mag in the kitchen, bolting down a couple of egg sandwiches with black coffee. She was his father's mother. But she never talked about his time in the ring.

By the time the Kid headed out, the sun was coming up and light flooded into the store. Mag had posted on the cash register an article that appeared after last Friday's semifinal. She had never been to one of the Kid's fights, but she



"Goodnight moon. Goodnight house. Goodnight breasts."

kept all of his boxing pennants and trophies on a shelf behind the counter. It was like a miniature shrine. He waved goodbye and headed out the front door. It was a four-mile run back to the house.

Of the four fighters the Steelworkers' Boxing Club sent to the finals, Kid Dynamite was considered to have the best prospects of winning. And as the lightest fighter he was the first to go up. He hadn't slept the night before, but then he never did before a fight. As soon as his hands were taped, Kid Dynamite shadowboxed until Juan told him to sit down and pulled up a chair for himself.

"You know the game plan?"

Kid Dynamite nodded. He was dripping with sweat.

"Reine had trouble making weight. Five hours in the steam room and three trips to the scales. Don't make your move until the end of the second round. If he's still strong, wait until the third. Are you listening to me?"

"The old man called me," Kid Dynamite said. "He said I should take it to him."

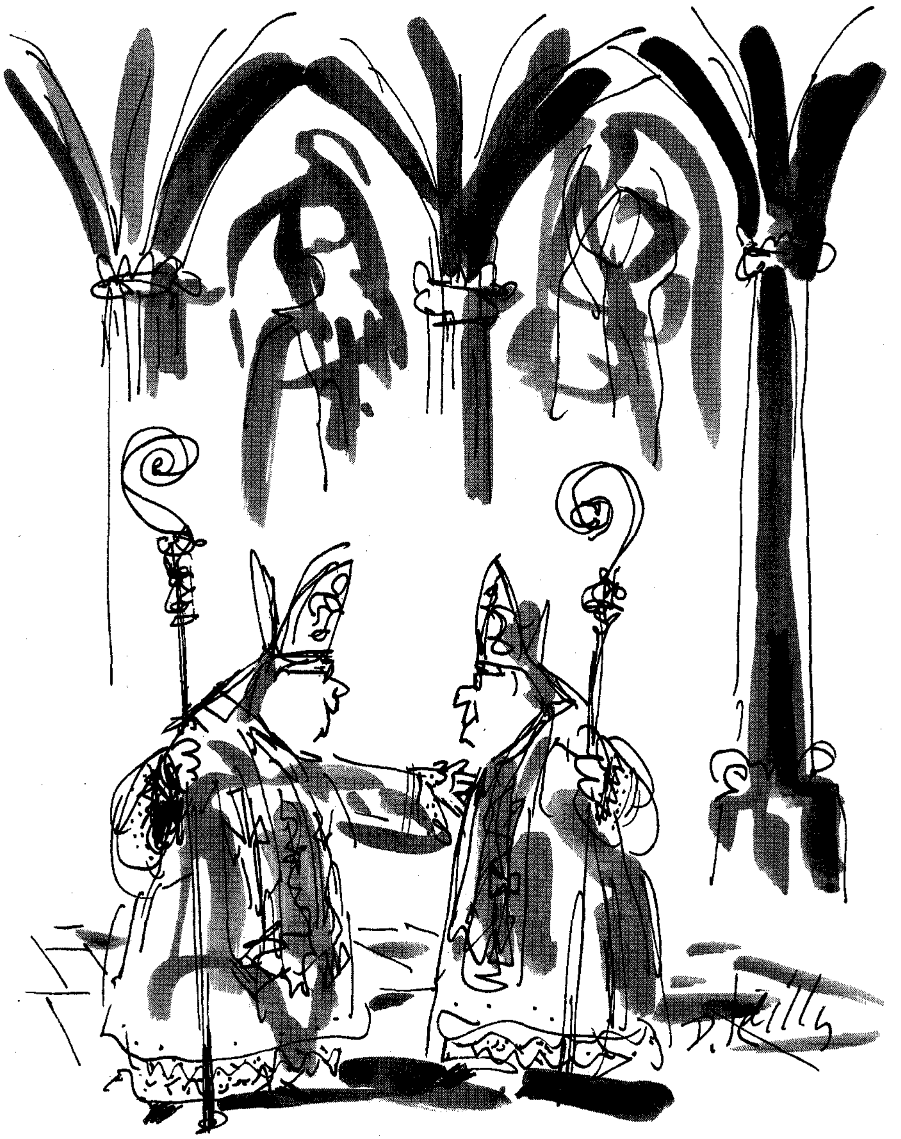
His coach, normally implacable, was incredulous. "Your old man, who's in a mental hospital two thousand miles away, told you this?"

"Yeah," Kid Dynamite said.

"Well, what do you think you should do?"

"It doesn't matter, really. I'm going to win tonight. I got a good feeling. I can *feel* it. I don't care what he does. I've been waiting a year to get this cocksucker."

"So you're going to do a job on him? No plan, no nothing! Just kick ass!" Juan shook his head in dismay. "Well, I hope you do. Just remember, the crowd will be with him tonight. It won't be your crowd."



"The young guy on 'Nothing Sacred' reminds me of us when we first started out."

Kid Dynamite got up and twisted his neck from side to side, bouncing up and down. Someone ducked into the locker room. "Let's go, Kid, you're up."

Kid Dynamite entered the arena and climbed up the portable wooden steps to the ring. Reine was already in the opposite corner, his red hair shorn in a buzz cut. There wasn't a drop of sweat on him. He looked the same as he had the year before. Kid Dynamite turned away, bracing his gloves against the ropes as he rubbed his shoes in the resin box. The bell rang several times and the referee called both fighters to the center of the ring. He gave them their instructions. "Gentlemen, touch gloves, and at the sound of the bell come out fighting."

Kid Dynamite returned to his corner, where Juan held out his mouthpiece. He set his teeth in it, clamping down hard as he slapped himself on the forehead a few times to make sure his headgear was tight. Then he turned and looked across the ring with a blank stare, waiting for the bell. The moment it rang, Reine came rushing across. Kid Dynamite did the same. Just before contact he spotted his grandmother—Mag. He was so shocked he had to look twice to make sure he was seeing things right. The only time Kid Dynamite could remember Mag leaving the store except for church was the day she had her teeth pulled. The store was open seven days a week including Christmas. It had always been that way. She was in the third row along with his mother and Cancer Frank, Melanie, and Verne.

Reine threw a left hook that just barely grazed the top of his head. Kid Dynamite heard it whistle as he ducked and watched Reine's elbow sail by. He came up off balance and started a left hook of his own, aimed over Reine's right hand. Reine's punch landed first, catching Kid Dynamite high on the forehead. Because his feet were too close together, and because Reine was strong, the force of the punch was sufficient to send Kid Dynamite reeling backward into the ropes. Reine tagged him with a double jab and a straight right hand to the side of the jaw, and suddenly Kid Dynamite was sprawled face down on the canvas. It seemed that the floor had flown up and hit him in the mouth. His whole body bounced hard. The canvas was as rough as concrete and his face, elbows, and knees stung with abrasions. He had gone down like he was poleaxed, and the crowd went into a frenzy. Knockdowns, at least spectacular ones, were rare in amateur boxing.

Kid Dynamite raised his head. His face burned. Pinwheels spun behind his eyelids, and he shook his head hard. He took in the ring through a blur of double vision. Looking over to his corner he saw the coach frantically motioning for him to stay down and take the full eight count. Meanwhile the referee was having a problem getting Reine to a neutral corner. Kid Dynamite had trouble seeing anything directly in front of him, although his distance vision seemed to be fine. He distinctly saw a smile flash across Cancer Frank's face. Mag was on her feet, screaming in German for him to get up. Never in his life had he heard her speak in her native tongue. Her face was red, and she was pounding her cane on the floor. She was dressed in a thick gray overcoat and pearl pop beads. Kid Dynamite had given them to her because her arthritis made ordinary clasps impossible.

It seemed that time had stopped. Kid Dynamite felt he was in a dream. Reine's corner was furiously shouting instructions, but Reine wasn't listening. His chest was puffed up and he looked supremely confident. Kid Dynamite shook his head again. The noise of the crowd seemed very far away.

Off in the seventh row Kid Dynamite focussed on a big man with a fleshy face and frosty white hair. He watched him raise his hands to his mouth and shout encouragement to Reine. For such a big man, the sound coming out of his mouth was surprisingly diminutive. Kid Dynamite wondered if his eardrum was broken. The man continued to scream. He was a well-built fellow, wearing a flannel shirt. Kid Dynamite noticed that one button on the man's shirt was larger than the others. The thread holding it in place had unravelled. It wasn't going to last long. Kid Dynamite wanted to go down into the crowd and warn him. For the man to lose a button seemed, at that moment, like a terrible waste.

The referee picked up the count from the timekeeper. He was looking in Kid Dynamite's eyes. "Five . . . six," he cried. Melanie had her face buried in her hands. Verne was on his feet, shaking his fist in the air. From behind he heard a fan's disembodied voice say, "Don't worry, the Kid is tough. He'll get up."

"Seven," cried the referee. Kid Dynamite was on one knee. Melanie lifted her head from her lap. "Eight!" He was standing. The referee looked in his eyes and rubbed Kid Dynamite's gloves clean. "You O.K.?" Kid Dynamite nodded yes. His legs were like Novocain. The referee stepped back and signalled for the fight to continue.

Reine marched across the ring in a straight line. He feigned a left and fired his best punch, the straight right. Kid Dynamite anticipated this and, with Reine walking in, countered with a picture-perfect left hook to the point of Reine's chin. It was the best punch Kid Dynamite had ever thrown, but Reine did not go down. This was no reason to be discouraged. Reine had not gone down, Kid Dynamite knew, because Reine still had hope. The Kid's job now was to eliminate it. He circled around Reine busily, setting his body and throwing punches in combination. Reine wobbled but didn't go down. By the end of the round, he was fighting back and Kid Dynamite was rubbing blood out of his left eye.

In the next round Kid Dynamite withstood an onslaught—everything Reine had. But as Reine started to tire and lost more and more of his composure Kid Dynamite set out to box him carefully and methodically. As Reine started winging punches, Kid Dynamite found a home for his right uppercut. By the end of the round, Reine's fair skin was marked with red welts.

In the corner, Juan urged him to go after Reine with both hands, but Kid Dynamite was also exhausted. Yet when Reine came out in the next round, clearly arm-weary, Kid Dynamite was able to summon energy from somewhere and pepper him with left hands. Then he moved inside, confident of his ability to slip Reine's punches. He straightened Reine with the right-hand uppercut and then threw a left-right combination with everything he had. It turned Reine sideways, but it did not knock Reine down. Reine pulled up his gloves and used his huge forearms to ward off further punishment. This was a big moment. It was tantamount to giving up, and Reine would not mount another offensive rally. Kid Dynamite moved in and out, working his jab until the bell sounded, ending the fight.

It took forever for the judges to compile their scores and hand them to the referee. Kid Dynamite chided himself for not pushing himself harder when in fact he had given his all. The referee announced a split decision in Kid Dynamite's favor. Juan barely had time to pick him up and swing him around before the ring doctor jumped into Kid Dynamite's corner and pressed a gauze bandage under his eye. In the excitement of the fight, Kid Dynamite hadn't felt the cut, hadn't been bothered by it after the first round. But now the doctor shook his head, looked at him gravely, and said, "You won the fight, but your tournament is over. That's a twelve-stitch cut."

Reine came over and slapped Kid Dynamite's glove. "Good fight. I'll see you next year."

Kid Dynamite felt an overwhelming affection for Reine. "Thanks," he said.

Reine, who had turned away, looked back and said, "Next time, I'll be in shape."

THE only other fighter from the Steelworkers' Hall to win that night was Eloise Greene, the club's middleweight. Greene, a cigarette smoker, caught fire and waltzed through the finals, winning the open title. For this he received a trophy, a green satin jacket, and his own headline on the *Beacon's* sports page. Kid Dynamite did not go in with the other fighters to watch the subsequent bouts. He did not even go back to clean out his gym locker. Suddenly, definitively, boxing was over. For years, it had protected him in ways he never entirely understood—a buffer, a cushion, a thing he had to do. By turning his back on it he knew that he was losing something that had given his life a magical sense of meaning and simplicity. The real world had seemed far away; now it was upon him. ♦

A REPORTER AT LARGE

FAMILY SECRET

A year after John Salvi's suicide in prison, questions are being raised about why he killed two abortion-clinic workers, and why his parents—and the state—didn't recognize his mental illness when they saw it.

BY MIMI SWARTZ

Salvi's parents at his trial in 1996: Was his schizophrenia rooted in the family's history?

ABOVE: G. MARTEL/BOSTON HERALD; OPPOSITE: BRIAN SNYDER/GAMMA LIAISON

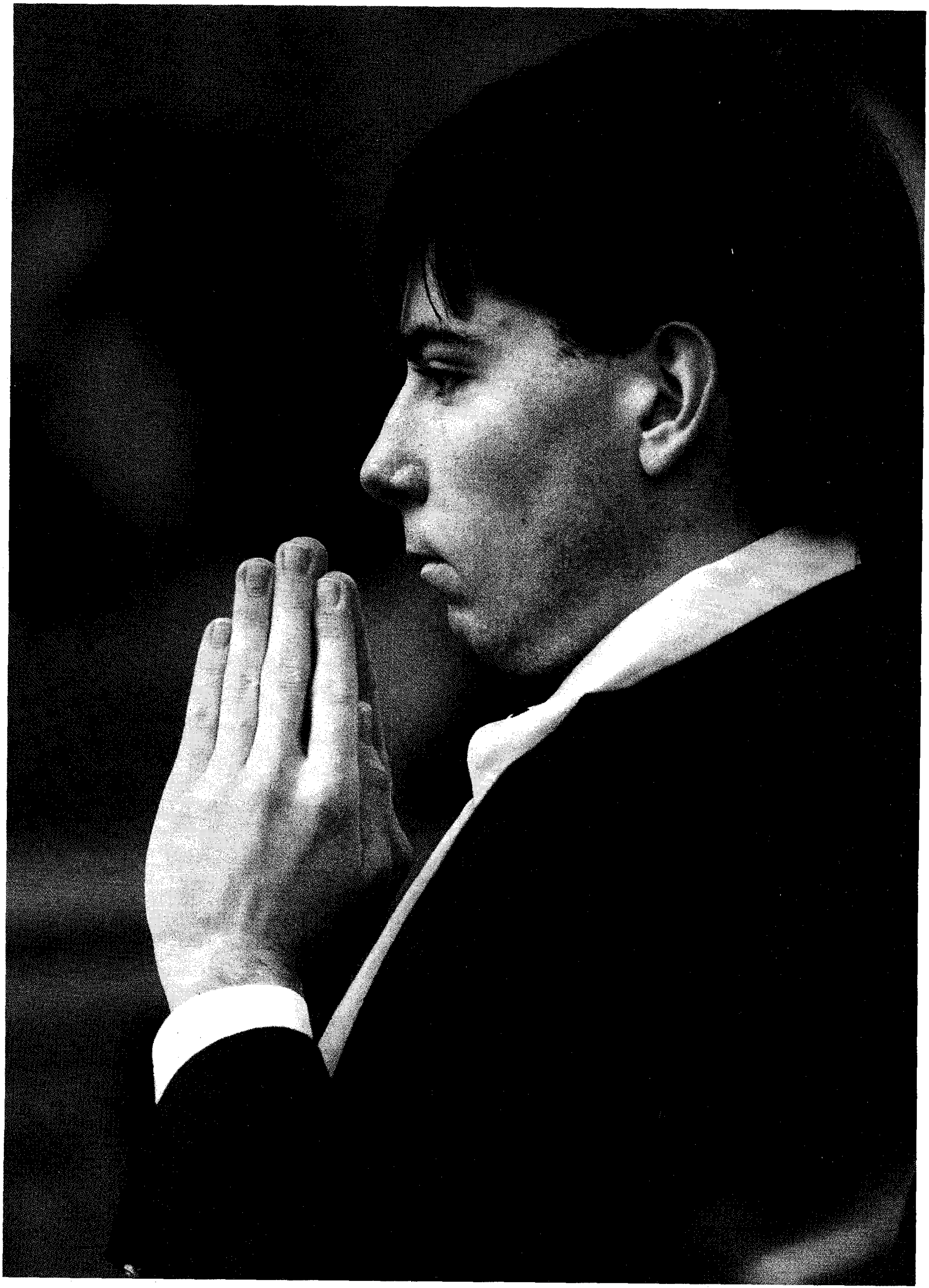
ANNE-MARIE SALVI is grateful for the house in Cape Coral, on the Gulf Coast of Florida, because its setting, on a canal, is so peaceful. If what she refers to simply as "the tragedy" hadn't happened, she would be here anyway, with her husband: another middle-aged couple whose only child had grown up and moved on, leaving them to begin again in a place with just enough room for two. As things are, she spends a lot of time in front of the television, but usually the only programs she can watch are the stock ticker on CNBC, because it calms her, and the talk shows on the Catholic cable network, whose guests, with their declarations of unshakable faith, reassure her. At fifty-four, Anne-Marie is a remarkably young-looking woman, and she has the shy, high-pitched giggle of the Catholic schoolgirl she once was. But when she looks in the mirror Anne-Marie often thinks, This isn't me.

Nearly three years ago, on December 30, 1994, the Salvis' son, John, walked into the Planned Parenthood clinic in Brookline, Massachusetts, and, with a .22-calibre semi-automatic rifle, shot and killed a twenty-five-year-old receptionist, Shannon Lowney, firing two times into her throat and upper body at point-blank range, then shot and seriously wounded three other people. After travelling two miles west to the Preterm Health Services clinic, he opened fire again, killing a receptionist, Leanne Nichols, aged thirty-eight, and wounding a security guard and a clinic worker. He fled, and got as far as Norfolk, Virginia, where he was apprehended, after spraying the lobby of the Hillcrest abortion clinic with about twenty rounds of ammunition. Despite a plea of not guilty by reason of insanity, on March 18, 1996, he was convicted on two counts of first-degree murder and five counts of armed assault with intent to murder and sentenced to two consecutive life terms with no chance for parole, plus an additional eighteen to twenty years after completing this sentence, at the state prison in Walpole, Massachusetts. In November of 1996, he was found dead in his cell—an apparent suicide by asphyxiation.

In the increasingly ugly battle over abortion rights, the Salvi killings were notably shocking, not only because of their seeming randomness but because the killer was a young man with loving parents and no history of criminal violence. "We didn't know," Anne-Marie says about John's psychological troubles. The phrase seems to give her comfort. "We didn't know," she says again. Her husband, John, is a tall, heavy, graying man of fifty-three, who since the killings has suffered from a heart condition and other ailments, which have made him look years older. He says wearily, "Kids do all kinds of strange things. You look back and it's easy to see, but when you're in that situation it's not easy. I thought it was me: he doesn't like me, he hates me, what the hell did I do to make him hate me? I didn't know what to think." Softly, he adds, "Our son was unfortunate enough to have had two stupid parents."

AS is the case with other families who have raised unexpectedly violent children, the story of the Salvis is, of course, not so simple. Anne-Marie's version is suffused with positive memories. "Young John had a normal, happy childhood—a *wonderful* life," she says. Her view of her own childhood, as Anne-Marie Trudel, in Ipswich, Massachusetts, is just as upbeat. She remembers how her mother kept coffee brewing all day for any neighbor who might drop by the three-story frame house where Anne-Marie grew up along with two younger brothers, Gerard and Dennis. She remembers the beauty of the melodies when her father played the organ at St. Stanislaus, the Catholic church half a block away, after he'd returned, unharmed, from the Second World War. She remembers her uncles, who gathered around the family piano to sing and reinforced her piety. Anne-Marie's Roman Catholicism was a literal faith of "know God, love God, serve God."

Friends and relatives, however, saw



Salvi in the courtroom: "Religion isn't a bad thing to be fanatical about," his father rationalized.

other patterns: alcohol abuse by many of her relatives, and fears of the outside world. When Anne-Marie left home, at thirteen, to attend St. Anne's Academy, a Catholic boarding school in Marlborough, Massachusetts, she did not write to her parents about her loneliness and paralyzing shyness. She had been brought up not to complain. "I was never one to talk about family with anybody," she says. "I don't believe in that. I'm a very private person."

Anne-Marie became a music major at Anna Maria College, in Paxton, Massachusetts, and just prior to her graduation she met a tall, gangly, wide-eyed young man who had a sly sense of humor. "It was love at first sight," she likes to say. "I think it was for him, too. The more we got to know each other, the more we fell in love." Her family took to John right away, and told her that she was lucky to have found him. Anne-Marie was excitable, given to unnamed fears; John was easygoing, always there to make things right.

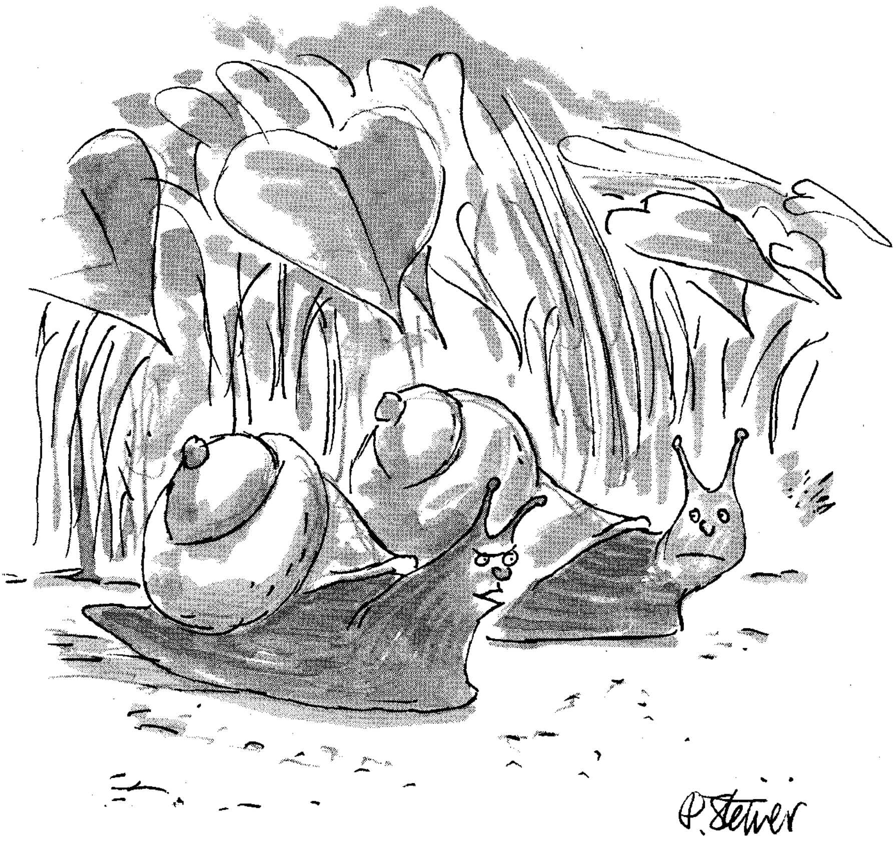
The Salvis were stolid, proud people: John's family came from Lynnfield, Massachusetts, where his father delivered home-heating oil. John was a dutiful son; when he couldn't settle on a career, he followed his brother's lead and became a dental technician, earning twenty-five dollars a week. John was sensible, and he wanted to put some money away before he and Anne-Marie married. When the time came, in September of 1970, they did things right: a wedding in St. Stanislaus, a champagne reception with full orchestra. The newlyweds had already bought a small house in Ipswich, overlooking the ocean, and they made do. Since they were short on furniture, Anne-Marie hung a hammock in the living room, close to the picture window. Sometimes, when she had the house to herself, she would lie there, staring at the waves, and swing slowly and deliciously. "This is enough," she told herself.

EVERY mother has snapshots like Anne-Marie's. She keeps hers in a Plexiglas box, which is stored inside a larger box, containing mementos such as an arrowhead and a wooden whale that her son carved in elementary school, and a cache of letters and statements he wrote much later, from prison. Anne-Marie stores this box in a small room in the Cape Coral house which was to have been John's when he came to visit. She keeps the door to it firmly closed.

The pictures show John, who was born in 1972, as a smiling baby, on his first birthday; on Halloween and on Christmas; on his father's shoulders in a swimming pool; as an altar boy in white vestments at St. Stanislaus. There are pictures of him in elementary school, singing "Yes! We Have No Bananas," of him riding in a teacup at Disney World, of him fishing, camping, graduating from high school. Year after year, there is the bright-eyed, dark-haired boy, flanked by beaming parents, his posture and expression constant: joyous, confident. But once John has moved into late adolescence the pictures change. One of the last ones—taken when John was nineteen—shows him with greasy hair and a blank face. If you didn't know the rest of his story, he would look like any other teen-ager going through a phase—and that is what his parents thought was happening.

Little John, as he was initially called, loved to dig for steamers on the beach with his friends, to fish with his father and his uncles. At the same time, he was raised with the French-Canadian Catholicism that had shaped his mother's life. There were a great many rules to be followed and a great many sacrifices to be made to get to Heaven, but John seemed eager for the challenge. Following the example of a great uncle who was a priest, he became an altar boy. When his second-grade teacher told Anne-Marie that John was exceptionally compassionate, she began to hope that he might grow up to be a doctor. She wasn't worried that his grades weren't particularly high. "He was average," she says—meaning that he fit in.

Anne-Marie doesn't remember her son's being overly upset when they told him, in 1984, that they would be moving to Florida. Her husband had been running a dental-prosthetics lab in partnership with his brother, and since his brother had recently settled in Naples they decided to move there, too. They found a stucco house just blocks from the bay, and soon Young John, as they had begun to call him now that he was older, was zooming his bike down the palm-lined streets to the beach. A few



"When you're on their flowers, you're a snail. When they want to eat you, suddenly you're an escargot."

OSKAR

You know, the squirrel was made for me and not me for
the squirrel, and it is running up and down that causes
the turmoil, while I am sitting with my own acorn in my
mouth and, unlike him, I am ashamed of burying my money—
though I did it for my children and in the long cold night
we will pass sweet figs between us and chunks of chicken
cooked in raisin juice and carrots almost white
from so much sugar. He keeps talking about the same tree
over and over, he is relentless, and dark whiffs of
joy called knowledge or memory keep bringing him
back, although only a dozen soft balls are still hanging
from one tree and truly nothing but a dried-up leaf
from the other. I warn him against the overbite
and the new dentists filling him with gold, considering
the bankers as thieves, grave robbers, and protocol
keepers, but he just stalks and flounces, and he just croons,
as if he were made of water or as if he just lived
for the wheel and its aftermath. I think we may be
celebrating in different ways and even have a different
view of the slow-moving sun itself, but nonetheless
I adjust his tail and rub his stomach and kiss him
the way I did when he lived on that rough little branch
and ask his forgiveness for selling him for a dollar.

—GERALD STERN

years later, he was filling the house with friends from the cross-country track team, the wrestling team, and the swim team. He was a passionate, determined boy. When he was on the high-school wrestling team in his junior year, he began to work out obsessively in the gym and took so many vitamins to build himself up that he had to see a doctor.

In the eyes of those who were not his parents, he was, perhaps, a little spoiled, and even Anne-Marie once complained, "My son's a male chauvinist pig," after he'd refused to make a sandwich for himself. Because he was an only child, it was easy to give him what he wanted, and because he was so enthusiastic afterward his parents took great pleasure in doing so. When he wanted a dog, they all went down to the pound and came back with Tippy, a collie-and-lab mix, who would become his constant companion.

In those years, the Salvis were preoccupied with financial concerns. With their savings, Big John and Anne-Marie had bought a mini-storage and U-Haul business as an investment. John worked mornings at his dental lab, afternoons at the mini-storage lot, and some nights doing extra dental work for his brother. Anne-Marie taught music and sold real estate. Even so, they were barely making ends meet. Young John heard about their worries at the dinner table—they never kept anything from him—but seemed unaffected by them.

Or so Anne-Marie believed. She walked past his room one day, and observed him speaking as if to a group, turning first to his left and then to his right. "C'mon, guys," he said. No one was there. Anne-Marie shrugged it off. But around that time he also stopped watching television with them, and stopped joining them to say the Rosary. Instead, he went into his room, closed the door, and read the Bible.

Some months later, the family had just finished dinner when John, who had turned nineteen, went over to the window and jumped back. "I was praying," he told them. "And I turned— I saw a big black bird-looking creature over my shoulder. I could hear its wings, and it was right there."

"Are you sure it wasn't something that flew by outside?" Big John asked.

"It's true—it's really true," Young John said. "I even heard a swishing sound from its wings."

"John, do you think you should see a doctor?" Anne-Marie asked.

Her son stared at her. "No, I'm fine," he said. "I'm O.K." Then he went to bed, and the next morning he seemed fine.

Anne-Marie found herself drawn into baffling discussions. "Knowledge is evil," her son would tell her.

"Knowledge isn't evil," she would reply. "It depends on what people do with it."

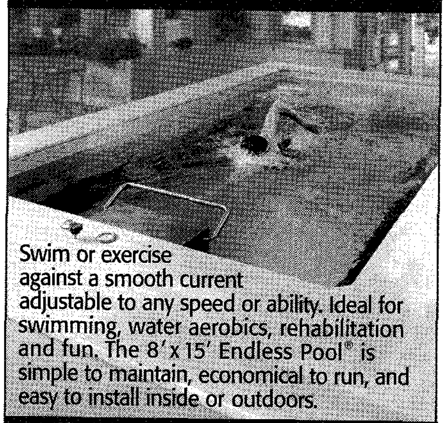
"Knowledge *is* evil," he would mutter. Anne-Marie didn't continue the argument. In the past, they had fought over the treatment of baby seals, over eating veal, and over buying products made overseas. John didn't want her to work—he wanted a stay-at-home mom. He wanted her to quit smoking. He didn't want her to use aluminum foil—it could hurt your brain. He accused her of trying to poison him with her cooking. She tried to brush aside such talk; after all, it was typical of teen-agers to try on new ideas and then throw them off like the clothes they left in piles in their rooms.

But she couldn't help noticing an increasing habit of withdrawal. His grades dropped; friends fell away. "Where have all the boys gone?" she'd ask, and he'd shrug. They'd had fights over the Bible, he told her once.

Her husband tried to calm her. "If you're going to be fanatical about something," he told Anne-Marie, "religion isn't a bad thing to be fanatical about."

FRIENDS and family members now say of the Salvis that if the couple had had another child, perhaps they would have been quicker to address their son's disconcerting changes. At the same time, however, the friends and relatives began to keep their distance as Young John's behavior became more extreme. "Everybody knew something, but nobody said anything," one of them recalls. "How can you talk to Anne-Marie, who doesn't want to say anything, or to John, when anything you say makes you feel like you're hurting him?"

After high school, Young John went to community college; during the second semester, in early 1991, he dropped out. "He always had one subject too



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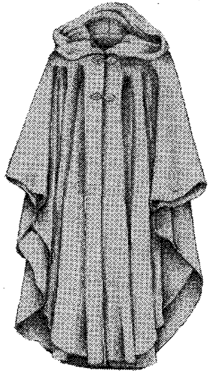

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many," his father liked to say. But Big John confided his worries to his friend Pat Buttino, a local fire inspector. Buttino thought that the young man might be a good candidate for fire-fighting school, since he was strong, healthy, in good shape. That made sense to both Big John and Anne-Marie, since their son liked to picture himself as a rescuer. Buttino pushed his application through a tough fire-fighting school in another town.

Then, just before John was to take the final test, he got the flu. Without calling his parents, he took the bus home, dropped his bags on the floor, and went to bed. They rushed him to the hospital, and there he was found to have a bronchial infection. John quit the school.

The next semester, Buttino pitched in again, and got John into a fire-fighting academy that was closer to home, in Fort Myers. This time, he graduated. All that John now had to do to get a job in Cape Coral was to pass a test that required him to run a mile. When he got to the track he balked. "Why didn't you run?" his father demanded furiously. John just shook his head.

Buttino finally told Big John that something might be really wrong with his son. He recommended a drug-and-alcohol-rehabilitation center, and Big John reluctantly called for information.

That evening, he asked his son if he was taking any kind of dope. "No. How can you even think I would do that?" Young John said. The Salvis never called the hospital back. Sooner or later, when John was applying for a job, they reasoned, he'd be asked for his medical records, and prospective employers would learn he'd been in a psychiatric hospital, even if he'd been there only for observation. What kind of job would he get then?

In the summer of 1992, John asked his parents to buy him a car. They turned him down, for where would they get the money? Soon afterward, the owner of a used-car lot was at their door, accusing John of having stolen a Camaro. His father reportedly paid more than the asking price for the car to keep the man from going to the police. When they confronted John, he turned sullen. "I got what I wanted," he said. "I got the car." Several weeks later, on Father's Day, there was a fire of undetermined origin at the mini-storage lot. When the police began asking questions, John's father told them that the boy had been home all night.

Nothing seemed to be working for Young John. Maybe if he moved back to Massachusetts, his parents thought, he could look up his old friends and begin again. He was twenty. They gave him an allowance of a thousand dollars a month and let him go.

JOHN moved into the family house in Ipswich—the house Anne-Marie had grown up in—and his uncle Dennis lived downstairs. Dennis was unhappy with the arrangement. He couldn't sleep: the upstairs lights were left burning all night, and there were strange noises at all hours. Besides, the place smelled awful. Anne-Marie thought that Dennis was just being selfish. A third of that house was hers, and Young John had a right to live in it.

But then they went up to visit him, in June of 1993, and Anne-Marie had to reconsider. It should have been a happy time. They'd sold their U-Haul business and the house in Naples, and Anne-Marie had inherited a small sum from her father. They'd bought a thirty-foot trailer and planned to spend most of the summer in New England and then, for their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary, to travel across the country. Maybe, they hoped, Young John would go along.

They were shocked when they saw him. There was a fish in a trash barrel which was covered with maggots. There were clamshells stuck to the kitchen countertops. Young John was filthy. He had found a job working on a construction site, and his clothes were covered with asphalt and grease. His hair was matted, like a mop, and stuck straight up.

"When was the last time you bathed?" Big John demanded.

"St. John the Baptist never bathed" was his son's reply.

The couple spent much of the summer helping John move in and out of various apartments. More often than not he would find "evil" in them—hiding in front of his door, pacing in the hallways.

John's religious fervor had taken a

troubling turn. One day, he greeted his parents with a bandaged hand. He explained that at work he had been asked to drive spikes through some railroad ties and had taken the opportunity to ask God to let every spike he drove hit Satan in the heart. "Let Satan know that John Salvi is driving the spikes," he had prayed, and then he had hammered the spike right into his hand. Anne-Marie was horrified, but all she could think to say was "Don't talk about Satan. Think about Jesus, think about love, think about nice things." Big John saw in the injury an opportunity he had longed for. "Maybe it's a blessing in disguise," he told his son. "You can come with us."

They travelled across the northern states to South Dakota, and then to Cody, Wyoming, heading for Yellowstone. Young John mostly sat in the trailer, reading the Bible. He would not bathe, and he would not change his work boots. He would not talk; he would only repeat Bible verses, over and over. After years of restraint, Big John finally broke down. In a Wal-Mart parking lot, he slammed out of the trailer and threatened to put John on the next plane home. Anne-Marie let him blow off steam, but the next morning she said, to both, words she later regretted: "We are going to have a good time, no matter what. This is our first trip around the country and probably our last, and, no matter what, we're gonna have a good time."

One night, in the desert between Las Vegas and Reno, Big John stopped to check the trailer connection. He had never seen so many stars; the sky was cluttered with them "like diamonds," he'd tell people later. He called to Anne-Marie, and then to John, and they stumbled out of the trailer, sleepy and cold, together for just one moment. It was Big John's favorite part of the trip.

DURING the abortion battles of the early nineties, Young John had joined the pro-lifers in the Boston area, and stood in front of clinics handing out leaflets that featured photographs of aborted fetuses. His intensity was too much for some of the other protesters. When they tried to shoo him away, he became even more inflamed. He acquired a new obsession: Catholics, everywhere,

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were being persecuted, he told his parents and anyone else who would listen; they were being driven out of their homes and their jobs. Moving from apartment to apartment, he dreamed up a system of Catholic welfare whereby the Vatican would help all destitute religious families by issuing money printed by counterfeiters who'd been released from American prisons. He believed that the Freemasons were behind a scheme of genocide in which Catholic girls were being sterilized in abortion clinics.

During their visits to Massachusetts, Anne-Marie and Big John saw but tried to ignore the glazed looks and embarrassed smiles on the faces of their friends and relatives when Young John held forth. Anne-Marie saw it this way: he had cleaned himself up, had enrolled in hairdressing school, and was attending classes regularly, as far as she knew. He moved to an apartment with a view of the water, in Hampton, New Hampshire. He had a part-time job in a beauty salon. If he had some half-baked ideas—well, lots of people had half-baked ideas.

He sent Anne-Marie a note on her birthday. It began, "Dear Mom & Dad I recieved your letter and want you to know I appreciate hearing from you. Thank you for the gift. . . . 'Happy Birthday Mom your 51' and smiling all the time About it." It ended, "P.S. Pray very hard because the 'chatholic' people are suRounded. I Really wasn't kidding Dad We live 'amonkst' them, they don't live 'amonkst' us. . . . The Masons run everything. . . . P.S. Don't sell your gun I'm not kidding you may need it very *soon.*"

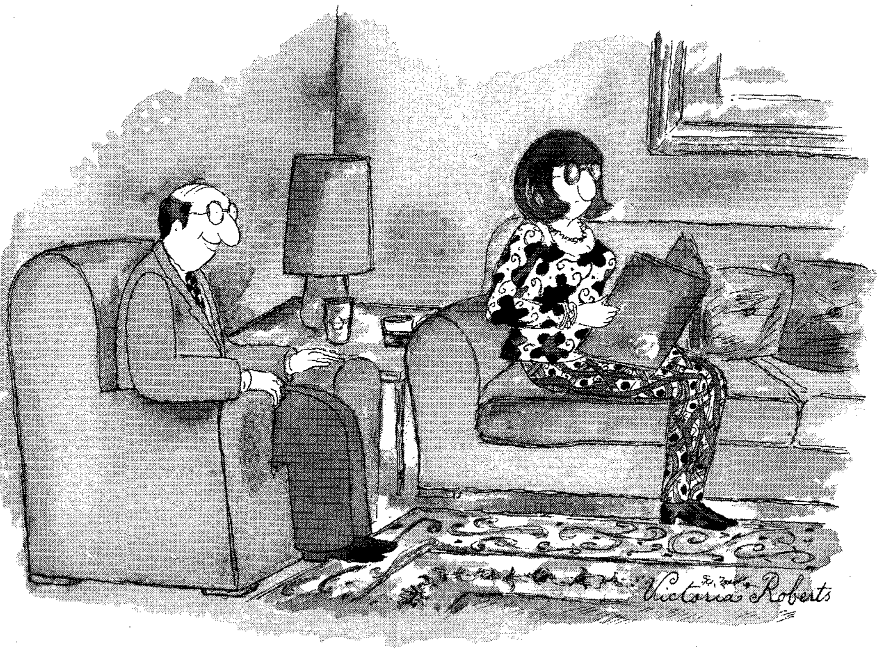
Anne-Marie folded up the letter and put it away.

THEY went up to New Hampshire for Christmas in 1994, and found John dazed and preoccupied. While staying in his one-room apartment, they discovered a box for a .22 Ruger rifle.

"Have you bought a gun, John?" his father asked tentatively.

"No," John replied. "It's an empty box."

It was raining on Christmas Eve, so instead of driving the hour or so from the apartment to St. Stanislaus they went to a 5 P.M. Mass at St. Elizabeth's, nearby. It was crowded with families—children in their Christmas best. Big John had gone to park the car, so Anne-Marie was alone with her son, standing in the back of the church. The service began, and John seemed fine. Suddenly, she felt him jerk, then stiffen. His eyes were glassy, his face red. She reached for him, but he was already marching toward the altar, lecturing the congregation on the failures of the Catholic Church. She pushed against the crowd in the opposite direction, searching for her husband, and found him coming in. "You've got to go up and get John!" she whispered, grabbing his arm. "You've got to stop him." Her son's voice filled



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the church. "You're all being ripped off!" he screamed. "You're all a bunch of yellow-bellied pussies!"

There was a scuffle. A woman took John's arm and began leading him down the aisle. Two men grabbed him, and Big John stepped in and took his son in his arms, pulling him close to his chest. "You should be helping me get this message out, you pussy!" Young John yelled. At the church door, John tried to pull away but was grabbed by a state trooper who dragged him outside. "Don't hit him!" Anne-Marie shouted. "He's my son!"

The trooper calmed John down and sent the young man and his parents on their way.

"We gotta do something," Big John told his wife when they were alone. She agreed, saying maybe it was drugs, maybe it was some sort of chemical imbalance. When the holiday ended and it was time to go back to Florida, they gave Young John four hundred dollars and agreed that when he finished school he should come back home, where he could be seen by the family doctor.

"I'll miss you," Big John said, embracing his son. "I love you."

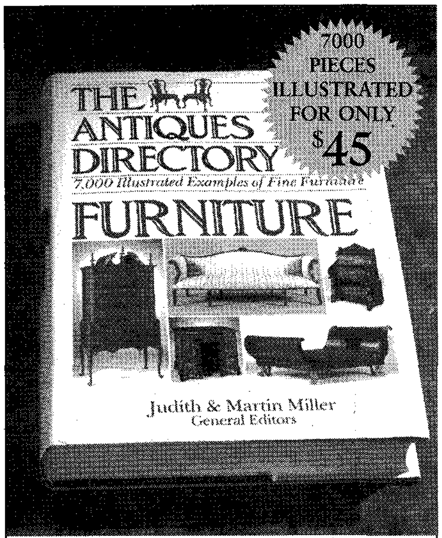
"I'll try to come down," John said. "I'll miss you, too."

As they turned onto the highway, heading toward home, John passed them in his black pickup. They waved goodbye, but he didn't look their way.

In Santee, South Carolina, they checked into a motel for the night. When they turned on the television, they heard a special bulletin that the F.B.I. was looking for John C. Salvi in connection with the murder of two abortion-clinic workers in Brookline.

Almost immediately, they called Anne-Marie's brother Gerard, who then called the F.B.I. In the early-morning hours, several agents arrived at the Salvis' motel. The Salvis coöperated as best they could. The investigators asked if their son had had psychological problems. No, Big John replied. And, no, they didn't know where he was. No, they didn't know where he could be hiding.

In Florida, they moved in with Big John's mother, to escape the press. In the following weeks, Anne-Marie stopped reading the papers. Her son, now in jail in Dedham, Massachusetts, was being compared to Michael Griffin, who had killed a doctor at an abortion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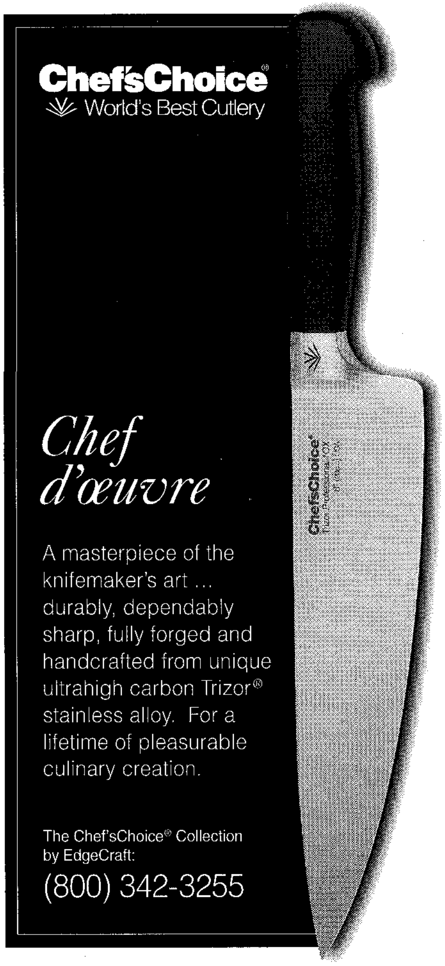

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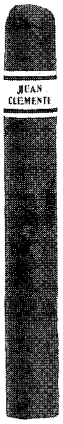

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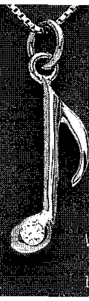

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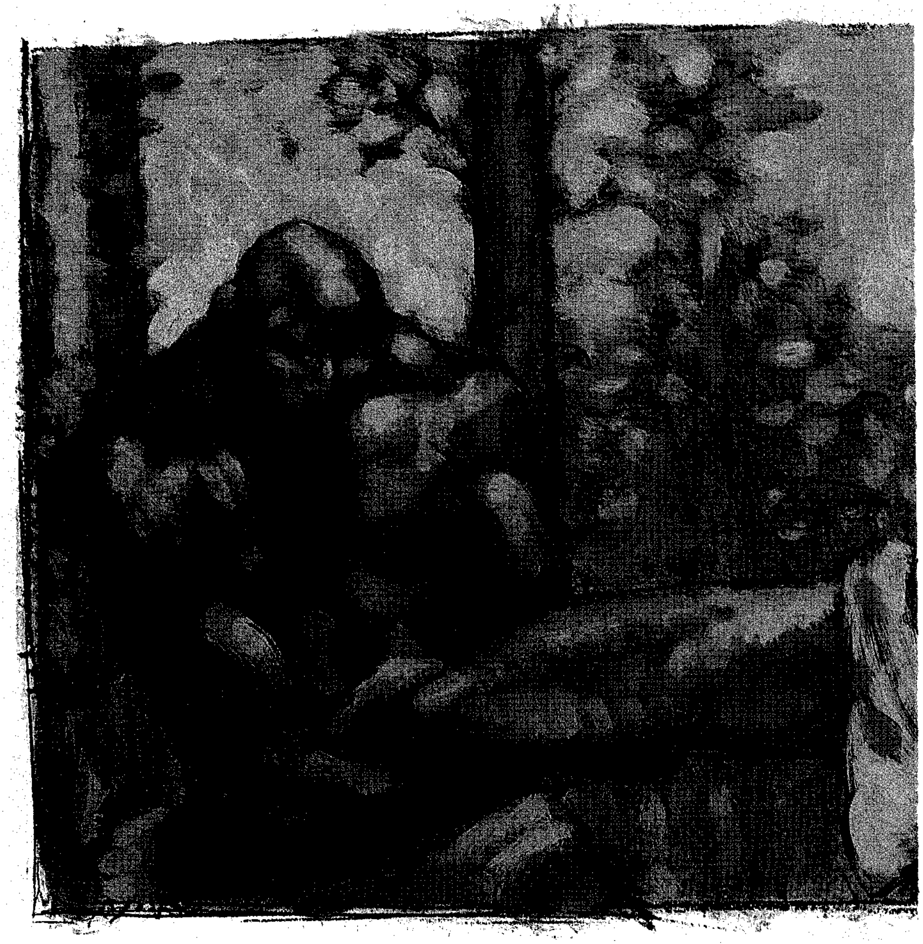
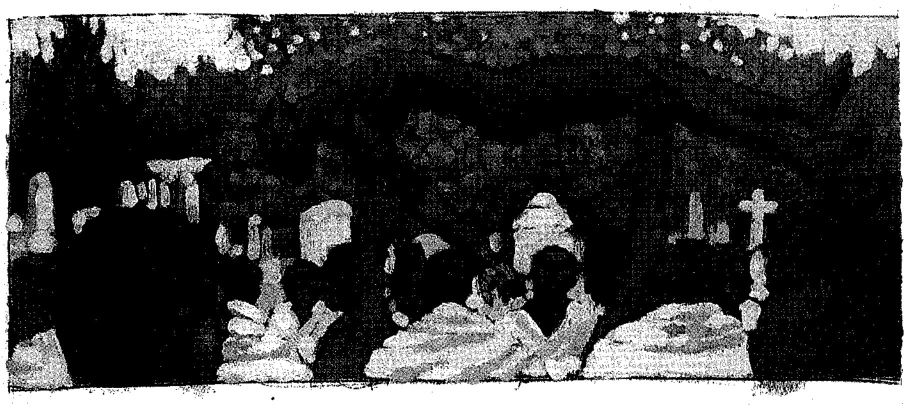
clinic in Florida in 1993, and to Paul Hill, who had shot and killed a doctor and a clinic volunteer in Pensacola earlier in 1994. "Another young man, handsome, clean-shaven, dressed in black. Dressed to kill," one reporter wrote in the Boston *Globe*. To Anne-Marie, it seemed that they were shaping a spurious narrative to fit the crime: she was described as having been an overindulgent mother, who'd spied on her child with a telescope while he played on the beach—not true. Young John had shot a childhood friend between the eyes with his B.B. gun—she'd never heard about it. "ALLEGED KILLER HAD LONG HISTORY OF ERRATIC ACTS," one headline read. "They don't know me, they don't know us, they don't know John," she said to herself.

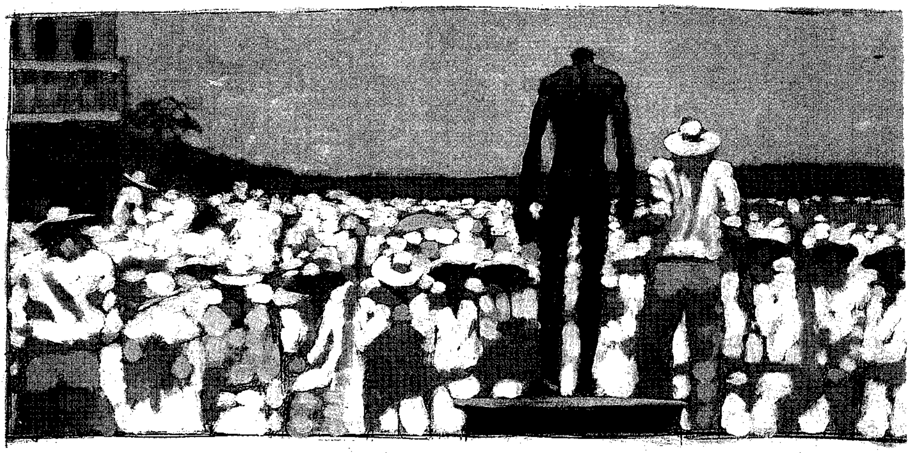
In preparation for the grand-jury hearing, the Salvis got themselves to Gerard's home, a turreted frame house in Laconia, New Hampshire, where

OLD WOUNDS

Before Steven Spielberg began principal photography on "Amistad"—the first large-scale Hollywood movie to confront the brutal history of American slavery—last winter, he wanted the film's key scenes to be story-boarded (i.e., illustrated shot by shot). The actress and producer Debbie Allen, who had brought the Amistad slave rebellion to the director's attention in the first place, recommended Kadir Nelson for the job. Nelson was then a twenty-two-year-old Southern Californian with a recent B.F.A. from Pratt Institute, in Brooklyn, and his emotional, sure-handed scenes of African-American life had much impressed her. As it turned out, his sketches for "Amistad" became a marked influence on Spielberg's directorial palette. In looking through his edgy illustrations, one is reminded of Henri Rousseau's lush color and of Jacob Lawrence's narrative sense. Nelson's paintings for "Amistad" richly reveal a young man's attempt to come to grips with himself as a late-twentieth-century black American by confronting the atrocities committed against his ancestors. The five paintings opposite will be included in "Give Us Free," to be published early next year by Newmarket Press.







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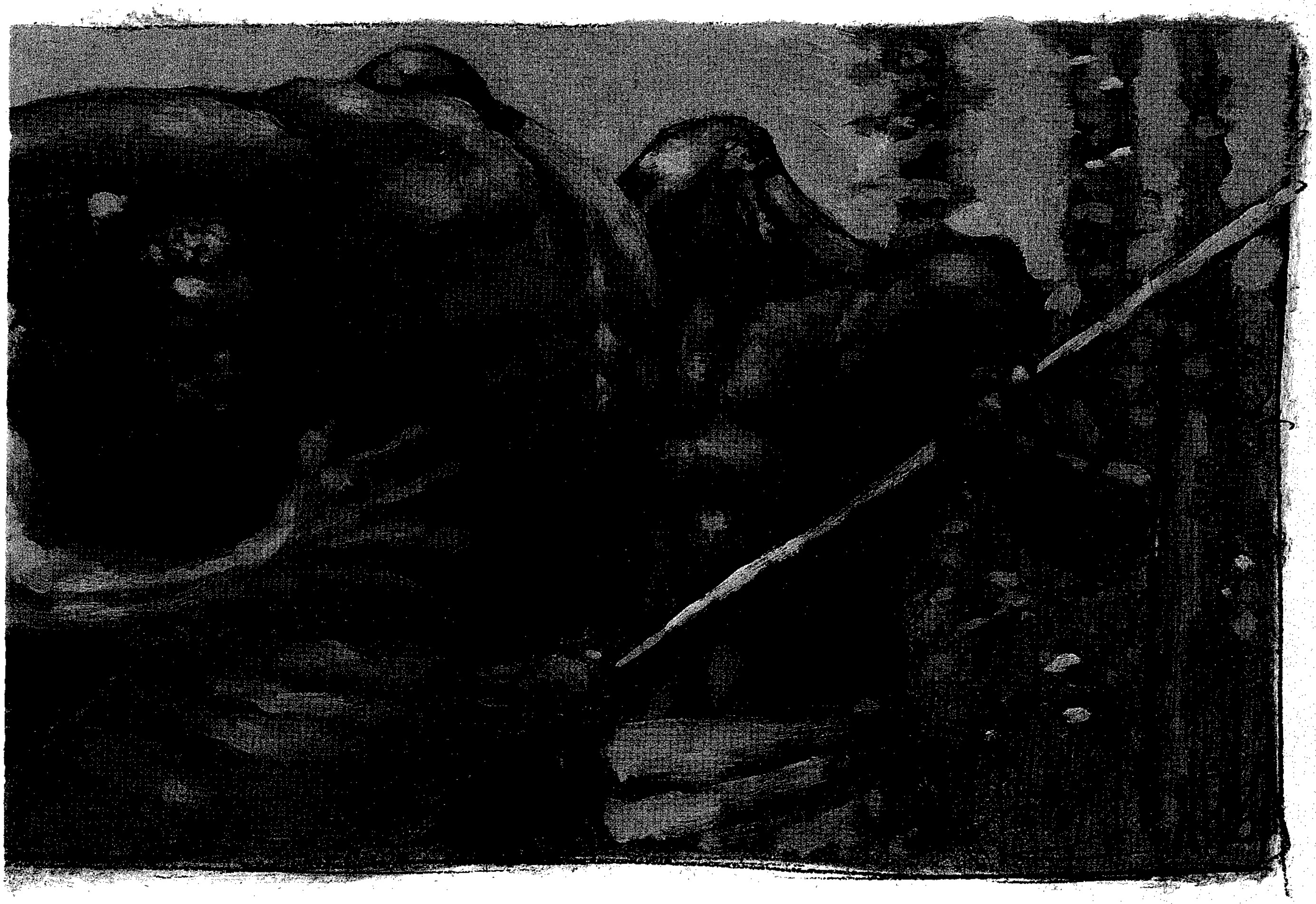

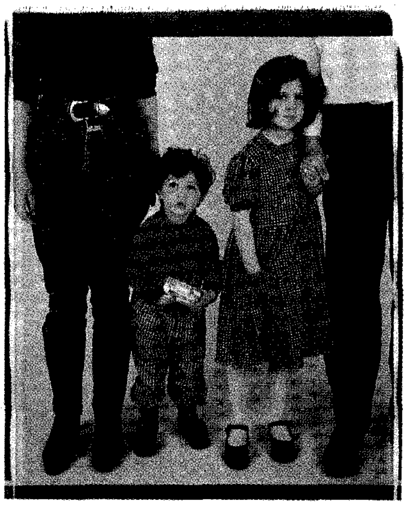

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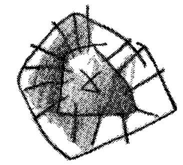
they stayed in an attic apartment. Despite taking Valium three times a day, Anne-Marie was so distraught, she says, that she couldn't dress herself in the morning. The press was camped outside the door, and on the days when she could bring herself to get out of bed she would find herself trembling. The Salvis' lawyer, William Crowe, had urged them to issue a statement several days after they testified. They sat at the kitchen table, weeping, while they wrote apologies to the families of the women their son had murdered, and tried to explain why they had not seen how dangerous he was. "We took his recent silent and distant behavior as an improvement over things that had happened in the past," Big John read at a press conference, on January 27, 1995, while Anne-Marie clung to him. "Now we know we were wrong. If we had gotten help for him maybe this terrible tragedy might never have happened. We want to urge all parents who notice unusual or strange behavior on behalf of their children to seek out professional help. Don't let your love for your child blind you from recognizing that problems exist."



Anne-Marie testified before the grand jury as if in a trance. Young John was indicted and charged with two counts of first-degree murder and five counts of assault with intent to commit murder, and she began thinking of suicide. The couple returned to Florida to wait until the trial began. Big John would drive her to the store and she would sit in the car while he did the shopping; he would come home from work and find that she'd spent the day sitting at the dinette table and staring at the refrigerator. She finally told her doctor about her behavior, and they agreed she should go to a psychiatric hospital.

When a psychiatrist there told her that her son was very sick, Anne-Marie began to observe the other patients. There was one young man, about nineteen or twenty, to whom she was drawn. He would sit in the corner of the dayroom, over a table of jigsaw puzzles, and pull hair out of his head. Sometimes she sat with him, but he never acknowledged her presence. On the day she checked out of the hospital, the young man's mother and sister came to visit him; after they left, he got upset, as he often did. Anne-Marie offered comfort. "You're very fortunate," she whispered to him. "You're so lucky they love you so much they come and see you." She couldn't tell whether she was getting through to him, but just as she was leaving the hospital he came up and hugged her. It was then, she recalls, that she decided to live for her husband and her son.

WHEN John Salvi's court-appointed attorney, J. W. Carney, Jr., first heard about the Salvi case, he thought that from the prosecutors' point of view it was a slam dunk: kid goes into two abortion clinics and, in front of eyewitnesses, kills two people and seriously wounds others—end of story. But that was before he had interviewed John, or, rather, had tried to. His new client would say only, "I don't admit Brookline, I don't deny Brookline, I don't acknowledge Brookline." It was possible that Salvi was thinking of himself as a political prisoner, maintaining a martyr's silence. But during his first meeting with Carney, Salvi requested a Barbara Walters interview; he also declared that if he was found guilty he wished to be executed and if he was found innocent he wanted to become a Catholic priest. Carney brought in Phillip Resnick, a forensic psychiatrist known for his ability to determine whether or not someone was faking mental illness. After interviewing John, Resnick reported that he was psychotic. "I think we've found a defense for your son," Carney told Big John and Anne-Marie. "He's seriously mentally ill."

Carney then brought in another expert, David Bear, a soft-spoken Harvard-trained psychiatrist. After several interviews, Bear concluded that John Salvi had the classic symptoms of paranoid schizophrenia, a psychotic disorder that usually emerges in a person's late teens and early twenties and is characterized by grandiose or persecutory delusions, hallucinations, and a decline in functioning. The onset of the disease is most often gradual—in the early stages it can mimic drug or alcohol abuse, depression, or simple adolescent rebellion—and its origins are thought to be genetic. On a cold day in February, Bear met with John and Anne-Marie and also with her brother Gerard and his wife, Pat. "Tell me a little about your family," Bear asked neutrally, and it was then

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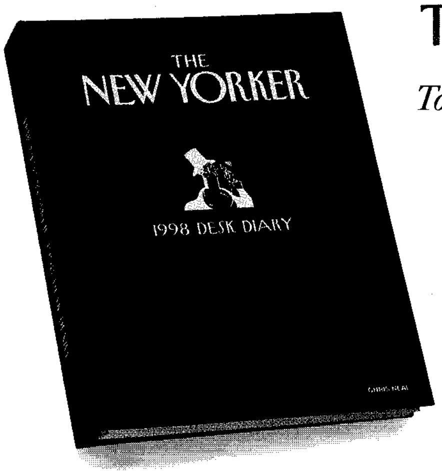

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14	MO + SS
16	E(LLIP)TIC (rev.)
17	AYE-AYE (*I* + *I* hom.)
18	S(EVEN)TY
19	TR(A)Y
20	TEEM (hidden in odd letters)

DOWN

1	WIG + W + A + M
2	BRAT(IS) + LAVA
3	BA + DEN
5	REAL ESTATE (hidden)
6	O(RIO)LE
7	GOiNG
11	GOLF + ER (rev.)
13	LYCEUM (anag.)
15	SPENT (first letters)
16	EAST (anag.)

that Anne-Marie offered an alternative view of her past—one she had never really admitted to herself.

Until recently, she had tried to explain John's psychological problems by speculating about physical causes: he was born with his umbilical cord wrapped around his neck; as a five-year-old, he'd been hit in the head with a swing. Maybe he was the way he was because she had been extremely depressed when he was born: she'd taken tranquillizers to ease the pain. But she now suspected that the truth went further back—that her depression, Gerard's alcoholism, John's illness, might have a deeper cause. With the doctor's help, Anne-Marie drew up a list of relatives to call, and for the next several weeks she and Bear unearthed the secret history of her family.

At first, they didn't want to tell her, but gradually a pattern emerged. One of Anne-Marie's uncles, a probable schizophrenic, had lived out his life in an attic, and had died there in a fire. Another uncle was described as having had a history of nervous breakdowns. His son now lived alone, venturing out only rarely, and refusing any contact with the world. Another cousin was reportedly being treated for severe depression; yet another was autistic. Alcoholism seemed pervasive. Over all, Bear discovered a profound fearfulness among Anne-Marie's relatives, especially her father. It was easy to see the links to John's psychosis—his "projecting the family situation onto the world around him," as Bear described it. John's worries about financial disaster were rooted in the financial fears of his father and maternal grandfather; his religious fervor was a distortion of the rigidly held faith of the Trudel family. All it took was the spark from a violent social movement to move John in a violent direction.

Bear created a family tree that he hoped would be turned into a display for the court. It showed a series of silhouetted heads—mothers, fathers, aunts, uncles, cousins. The silhouettes colored blue signified relatives unaffected by mental illness; bronze denoted those suffering from disorders like alcoholism and depression; and black was for the seriously ill—those suffering, according to behavioral histories, from psycho-

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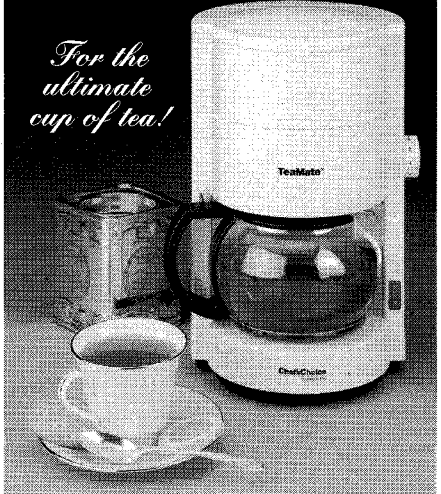

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ses. Aside from those of Big John and his brother, father, and mother, the blue faces were few.

FOR the first six months of 1995, Anne-Marie commuted frantically between Florida and New England. Young John was not doing well in the Dedham jail. He proselytized, he got in fights, and when she saw him he had cuts and bruises. When he was asked if he would like help, he insisted that he had no mental problems, and the jailers took him at his word. He wasn't eating much, because he thought the food in the prison cafeteria was poisoned. Anne-Marie bought him candy bars and chips from the vending machines, and watched him eat like a starved animal.

He refused to tell his lawyers why he had killed Shannon Lowney and Leanne Nichols. Instead, he would appear in the visiting room, his hair filthy and plastered down with Vaseline, his skin broken out with pimples, his stare vacant, and his body rigid, and he would be carrying a beat-up brown folder stuffed with crumpled papers from yellow legal pads he had in his cell. His method of greeting was to riffle through his file, find his most recent statement addressed to the populace, and slap it up on the glass that separated them. "Did you read it?" he'd demand. "Did you read it?" Anne-Marie would try to change the subject, and he would slap up another page to silence her. During one visit, she read, " 'Catholic eyes are smiling about a tithe in the church without the ability to raise a bloomin tot.' Serf! Sayith! Pious Pontiff Percent on a Podium! Playing Piccolo! Peace Pastor on Pastoral Paucity in Parochial Parliament! We will not ask our congregations for a tithe unless it is to fight for the right of our bloomin tots."

The defense got a competency hearing in July of 1995. Anne-Marie went to the Dedham courtroom alone, because Big John felt that he would lose his clients if he left his business in Florida. He tried to cheer her up, and said he and Tippy were eating well—pots of chili, bowls of stew. It was almost funny: her husband and her son's dog were expanding, and she was shrinking.

As she listened to the defense experts, the term "paranoid schizophrenia" came to seem like an incantation. Paranoid schizophrenia explained her son's delusions of a Catholic holocaust, his notion that male Catholics were sterile because of spermicides secretly injected into their scrota by nurses at hospitals run by Freemasons. The disease explained the deadness in his eyes, the disappearance of his friends, and his inability to stay with one job. Even his insistence that he was sane, the defense maintained, showed that he was insane.

But the prosecution had another version of events. The Norfolk County First Assistant District Attorney, John P. Kivlan, portrayed the defendant as a spoiled child who had managed to finish high school, fire-fighting school, and hairdressing school, had found himself several jobs and apartments, and had once before bought a .22 like the one he used in the murders and had outfitted it with a silencer.

To Anne-Marie, such facts were immaterial. When correctional officers had to carry Young John out of the competency hearing, as he screamed, "I have no demerits on my driving record!," Anne-Marie was sure that the judge, Barbara Dortch-Okara, would understand that the defendant was seriously mentally ill.

A few weeks later, when she was back in Florida, Carney called with news. The Judge had found John competent to stand trial. Oh, my God! she thought. How can this be? Didn't she listen to the doctors? Couldn't she see how sick John is?

THE insanity defense is used by fewer than one per cent of all defendants, according to a 1991 study funded by the National Institute of Mental Health, and in those cases only twenty-six per cent of all defendants are acquitted, largely because questions asked in the legal realm are different from those raised in the medical one. A central question in medicine is: To what extent is the patient a danger to himself or others? Clearly, John Salvi was both. But in court the overriding question is at once narrower and harder to evaluate: Did the defendant know right from wrong? It is eminently possible to be legally "sane" while being clearly psychotic. That John suffered from paranoid schizophrenia complicated things further, since people with that particular psychosis often retain a higher level of functioning than other psychotics.

Additional factors also worked against an insanity defense. Although Carney insisted that the trial, which began in February of 1996, was about mental illness and not abortion, few of those involved saw it that way. Tremendous political pressure was exerted on the court: liberals wanted Salvi punished to help insure the safety of abortion clinics; conservatives wanted him punished, period.

In the few months of John's incarceration, he had deteriorated profoundly. In October, 1995, correctional officers reported that he was washing himself and brushing his teeth with industrial cleaners. In December, they had found him with a noose around his neck. He had made it from a pillowcase, and he told the guard that it was for stimulation. The strain on Big John was severe, too. He had come up from Florida just before the trial started, and during the first week of jury selection he suffered chest pains and had to leave the courtroom. An examination revealed evidence of an undiagnosed heart attack. So much had been happening, John said, that he'd simply ignored it.

Anne-Marie hated the old, dingy courthouse, where she and her husband were greeted each morning by cameras and reporters. Inside, she skittered past the relatives and friends of the women who had been killed; she longed to go up to them, but she couldn't force herself to do it. They have only hate in their hearts for me and my family, she thought.

One of her son's victims did approach them. He was Richard Seron, a security guard, whom John had wounded at the Preterm clinic. "I just wanted to tell you that I don't bear any grudge against either of you or your family," he said. Anne-Marie embraced him. He still remembers what she said to him next: "I think the best thing for my son would have been if you had killed him."

IN court, John held up legal-pad sheets, demanded to speak to "the people," overturned a table, and was carried out of the courtroom. One day, he stopped the proceedings to ask for a piece of candy.

Even so, John Kivlan insisted that the accused was sane. Kivlan showed how Salvi had moved to New Hampshire, bought a .22 rifle, and used hollow-point bullets, which were more deadly, and how he had practiced his aim and mapped out his attack and escape routes.

Anne-Marie remained steadfast in her belief that the jury would see John as she did. "He was insane," she told herself. "He did not know what he was doing." This was not her son. This was schizophrenia.

On February 27th and 28th, her husband took the stand. It was hard to believe that he was only fifty. His hair was gray, his eyes were wet, and he sat hunched in the chair, too big for the seat. Leading him through his testimony, Carney's partner, Janice Bassil, had to keep asking him to speak up.

During cross-examination, Kivlan gently attacked the witness where he was most vulnerable. He had covered for his son after John stole the car, Kivlan said, and he had vouched for John when others had linked him to a suspicious fire. And why hadn't they told the grand jury about his hallucinations? Why hadn't they reported the empty gun box they had found in John's apartment, or their concern that something had gone terribly wrong with their son? "Mr. Salvi," Kivlan continued, "you have already told us that you did not, as a result of any observations that you made or anything your son told you, seek any psychological treatment for him, did you?"

"No, I didn't," John said softly.

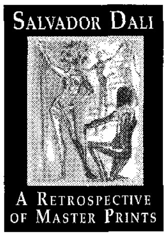
"And that's because you indicated in part that at the time you didn't think it was that significant. Is that right?"

Big John answered slowly. "Some of the time, yes."

Kivlan persisted, saying, "And you have already indicated that many of these things you never mentioned to anyone until after your son was arrested, after the evidence against him had been disclosed, after he had defense attorneys, and after he had a psychiatrist retained; is that right?"

"That's true," he answered.

Citing strict Massachusetts law concerning secondary evidence, the Judge refused to admit the history of family mental illness that Anne-Marie and Dr. Bear had compiled. When, on March 18th, the jury found Young John guilty on all



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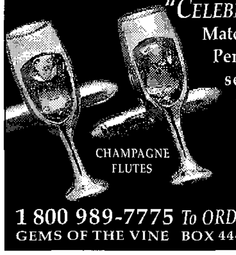

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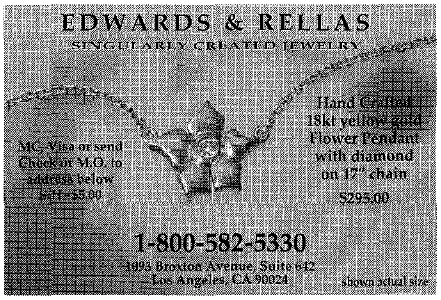

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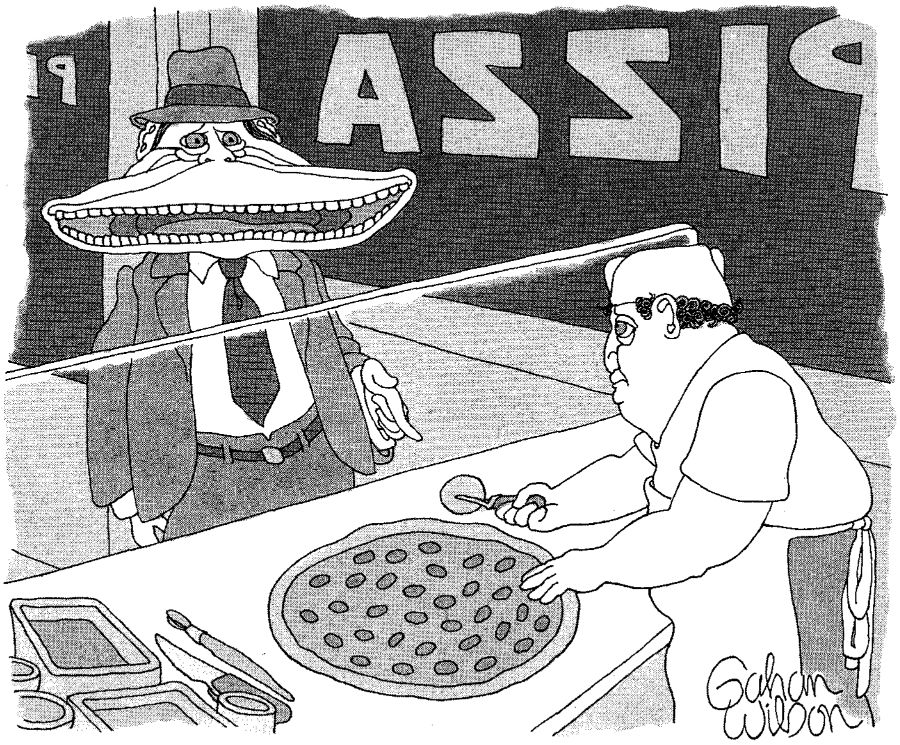

"I'd just as soon it wasn't cut into those funny little pieces, if you don't mind."

• •

counts, the reporters pushed forward, demanding comment from his parents. "If there were any justice, my son would be in the hospital and I'd be in jail" was all that Big John could say.

After the verdict, Anne-Marie held out one last, vain hope. There was a possibility that prison officials would send Young John to the state hospital for the criminally insane at Bridgewater, Massachusetts, where he might get help. In the end, despite Carney's entreaties, John was sent to the state prison in Walpole. During the initial three-month classification process at the Concord prison, he spent much of the time in isolation; the only psychiatric doctor to see him during that time did so out of curiosity. Young John had become the man nobody wanted to know. In the opinion of his attorneys, for the state to offer psychiatric treatment would only have supported the defense's appeal; it was easier for them to ignore his mental illness, to keep it secret.

IN late summer, Walpole was hot: the prisoners roasted under a glass atrium. Later, when the fall of 1996 turned cold, so did the prison. John didn't have enough warm clothes, and Anne-Marie called and requested permission to give him some. No, she was told; she couldn't give him the clothes unless he filled out a request form. "But he *can't* ask for them," she said. "He's too sick!" In one of Young John's letters to her, he described a method for cutting into a vein, inserting a tube, and blowing air into it to cause a massive stroke. Another message took the form of a catechism: "Did you ever experience suffocation then being suffocated? Yes, during my probably fourteenth year living I did request my cousin too tie me then suffocate me using a plastic bag and elastic during sufficient time too allow myself too be unconscious."

The last time Anne-Marie saw her son alive was during a visit she paid him on a cold day in October. Very thin, he was wearing two soiled T-shirts. He was bruised and his eyes were blackened, and he was afraid. "Mom," he said, "this is a scary place."

On the night of November 28th, Anne-Marie prayed before going to bed, "Dear God, if it's not in Your will to heal this terrible tragedy, please take Young John in your arms, and into heaven." The next morning, she got a call from the deacon at the prison. Her son had apparently taken his own life.

"JOHN C. SALVI 3D was insane," an editorial in the *Globe* declared after his death. "We knew that, but we didn't care. The violence he inflicted was so horrific, the victims he claimed were so appealing, the cause he came to represent was so extreme, we simply shut our eyes to the reality of his madness in order to reap the rewards of our revenge. We sent a raving lunatic to the state prison in Walpole because he sent two promising young women to their graves."

The funeral was held at St. Stanislaus. It was conducted by the priest who had baptized the deceased. Family and friends came, and gathered around Anne-Marie and Big John. "We knew something was wrong," they told the couple. "We just didn't know what to say."

Over the next several months, Carney and Janice Bassil looked into the circumstances in which John Salvi killed himself. He was reportedly housed with other mentally impaired inmates in a part of Walpole known as 10-Block. The attorneys were told that other inmates had allegedly been allowed to steal John's clothing and food; he had been seen begging for help, and had been taunted for his crimes; one prisoner reported that both other inmates and staff had suggested that he commit suicide. "In my opinion, he only had brief moments of contact with reality," one prisoner wrote to Carney. "He spent all his time in his cell. And most of that time he was without sheets or a pillow. And his mattress smelled so bad you could smell it from the stairs next to his cell." When it came time for John Salvi to kill himself, he probably did not act alone. "John was already suicidal," Bassil says. "Was he goaded into killing himself? It's entirely possible."

Last December, a committee of mental-health professionals appointed by Governor William Weld confirmed that John Salvi had suffered from some type of psychotic disorder while in confinement. In late January, the state set aside his conviction, in accordance with a Massachusetts abatement law, which applies to felons who die before their appeals have been heard. To John and Anne-Marie, at least, the ruling meant that their son was absolved of his crimes—"innocent by reason of insanity," his mother says. ♦

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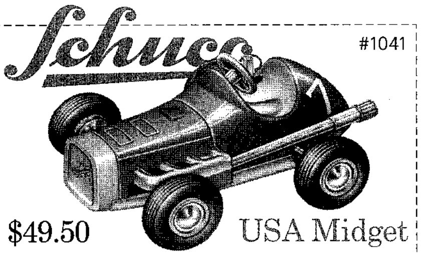

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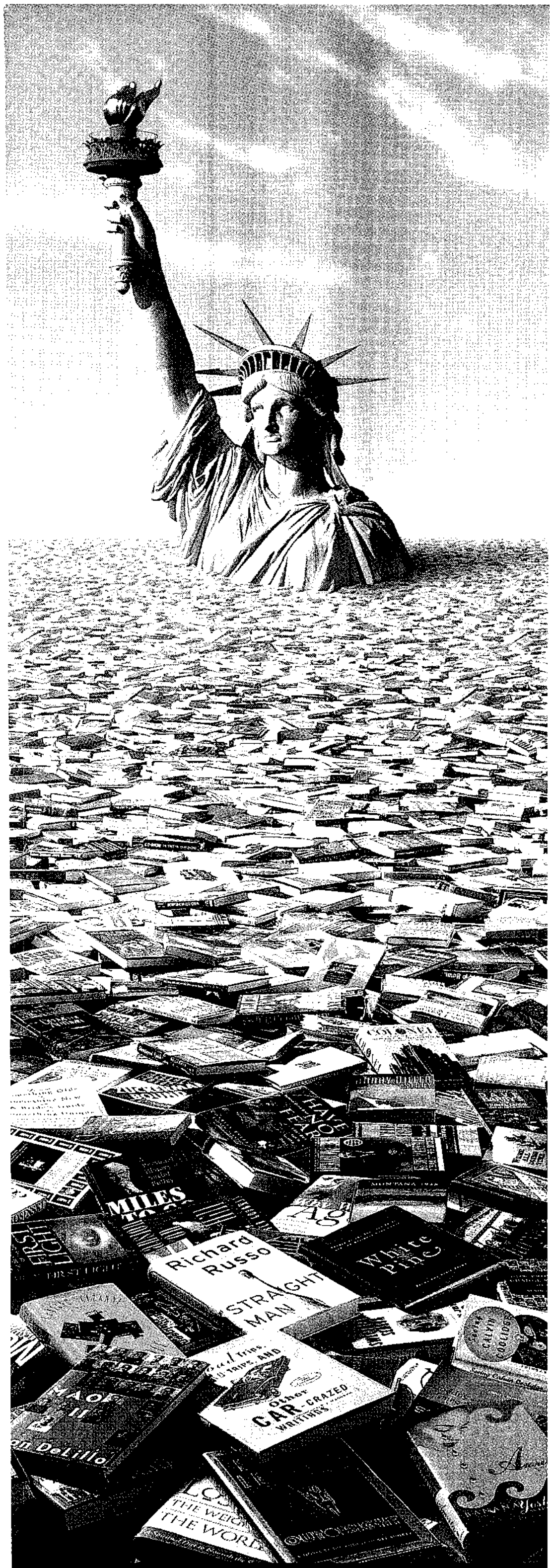

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MEMOIR OF A REVOLUTIONARY

Doris Lessing looks back on bad politics and worse men.

BY CLAUDIA ROTH PIERPONT

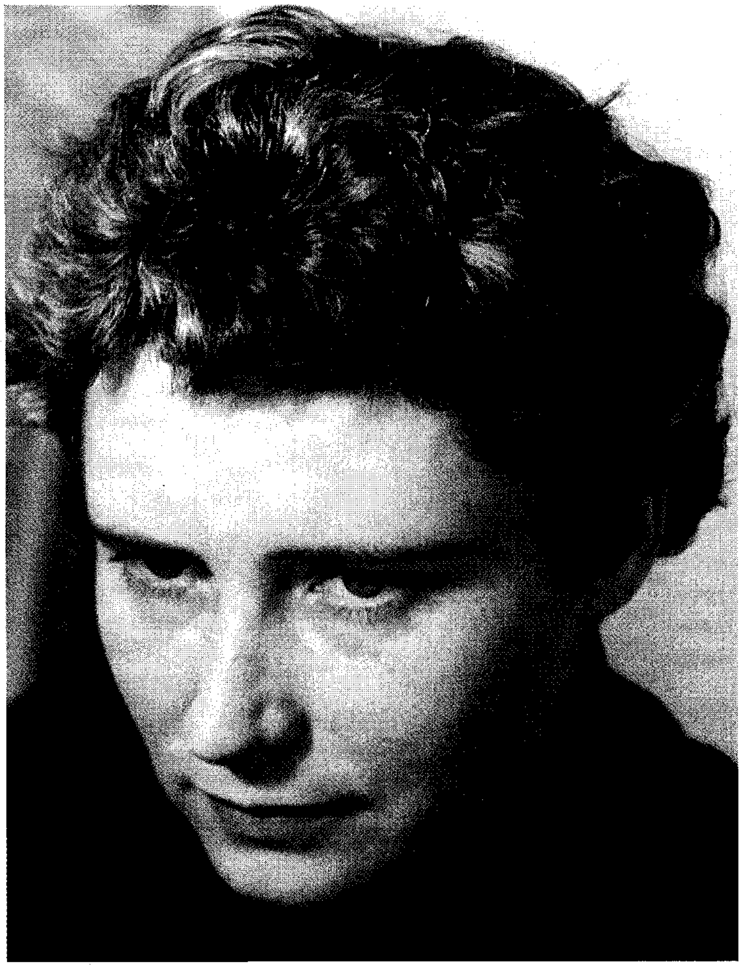
On a blanket on the lawn under a cedrillatoona tree, in Southern Rhodesia, in 1942, a young woman sat explaining to her two children why she was leaving them. The boy was three years old and the girl not yet two, but she believed that they would understand someday, and thank her. She was going off to forge a better world than the one she herself had grown up in, a world without race hatred or injustice, a world full of marvellous people. She later admitted that she really hadn't been much interested in politics; what had drawn her to the local Communist Party was the love of literature that she'd found she shared with its members—some twenty mostly well-off, young white people who formed a self-designated Party branch in nearby Salisbury—and the sense of heroic expectation that surrounded their lives. They were eagerly awaiting the revolution that they believed would end the hateful white regime, and, if their activities were principally confined to meetings and disputes and love affairs with one another, their goals were undeniably noble. The newest comrade had not yet begun to consider the disparity between their professed goals and their actions, possibly because she could not afford to consider the disparity between her own.

Doris Lessing's stingingly self-mocking account of her escape from maternal to global responsibility appeared just a few years ago, in the first volume of her autobiography, "Under My Skin." Now the second volume, "Walking in the Shade" (HarperCollins; $27.50), carries her story up to its political and emotional climax, twenty years later, with the publication of her most celebrated novel, "The Golden Notebook"—which has been in print since 1962 and become a fixture of the social history it helped to shape. Many of the scenes in these memoirs are already familiar, since Lessing has drawn on the particulars of her experience throughout the broad reaches of her fiction, characteristically joining the daily realities of life on the veldt or in a London flat to the biggest political issues of the age.

"After all, you aren't someone who writes little novels about the emotions. You write about what's real," a Party comrade assures "The Golden Notebook"'s emphatically autobiographical heroine, Anna Wulf. A fully self-conscious specimen of the "position of women in our time," Anna is also an individual of high neurotic distinction, the very model of the modern madwoman who has found her way down from the attic to the bedroom only to stand fumbling for decades with the next set of keys. It is Anna—an earnest revolutionary with a weakness for scarred and brooding men—who patiently writes and assembles the many parts of "The Golden Notebook" itself: an old-fashioned baggy monster of a modern novel, at once didactic and feverishly intense, thick with sermons and stories about African racial policy and Soviet Communism and the modern male's inability to love and the vaginal orgasm and the question of whether women can ever be free. Anna's goal is to write a book that will change the way people see the world, and many readers of "The Golden Notebook" claim that Lessing herself accomplished something remarkably like that.

"Walking in the Shade," which begins with Lessing's arrival in England, in 1949, just after the end of her second marriage, takes a far more caustic view of these goals and possible accomplishments. A blunt and hasty book, it provides a less compelling—even a less convincing—version of Lessing's life than the complex novel whose themes it shares. Yet the memoir is a valuable guide to the equally complex human being who now questions whether that novel was worth writing, and a portrait of the artist as a woman and a thinker which is as troubling as it was evidently meant to be.

"I WAS free. I could at last be wholly myself," the gay divorcée exulted as she caught sight of London from the ship she'd boarded in Cape Town. "A clean slate, a new page—everything still to come." Readers' expectations of a triumphant resolution to "A Doll's House," however, are quickly smashed. Looking back, Lessing is sardonic, even accusing, as she marvels at what she terms her adolescent sense of self-possession. In the modern self-experiment of a life she had begun, freedom would turn out to be much harder to use than it was to win.



Doris Lessing in the nineteen-fifties. Joining the Communist Party, she writes, was *"probably the most neurotic act of my life."*

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She was nearly thirty, and had brought with her the manuscript of her first novel and also a son, aged two and a half. Her second marriage had been no more than a wartime arrangement made to avail a German lover in Rhodesia of her British citizenship. To her surprise, she'd found that she yearned for another baby—a yearning that she now accuses Mother Nature of having aroused in order to make up for the war's wounded and dead. Against such a force she hadn't a choice. And so her account of her early London days becomes a catalogue of the hardships of single motherhood, what with getting up at five, working for too little money, feeling ever duty-bound and exhausted. Then, there was the tremendous loneliness and exclusion from adult society. London was still a dark and blinkered city, a barely recovered war casualty itself. She describes walking the empty streets alone at night, and the tantalizing glimpses of fellowship in the lighted pubs she sometimes passed. And one feels that if only these pubs had been a little less beery or more welcoming to a foreign woman Lessing might not have committed "probably the most neurotic act of my life," about a year after her arrival, by officially joining the Communist Party. She writes:

> I did know it was a neurotic decision, for it was characterised by that dragging helpless feeling, as if I had been drugged or hypnotised—like getting married the first time because the war drums were beating, or having babies when I had decided not to—pulled by the nose like a fish on a line.

If this lends some limited clarity to her reasons for joining, a good deal of the book is spent anxiously trying to explain why she stayed on past so many protests of her conscience. Riddled by doubts from the start, she was increasingly dismayed by the petty corruption of the British Communist bureaucracy and by evidence of the deadly Soviet variety, impossible for even the most faithful to ignore after Khrushchev's 1956 revelations of Stalin's atrocities and the military suppression of Hungary later that year. In fact, she was sufficiently outraged about Hungary to write a "passionate letter protesting about it" to—astonishingly—the Union of Soviet Writers. Perhaps no one has taken the power of the pen more literally; one longs to have witnessed the bleakly Gogolian farce out of which a "conciliatory letter" was produced for her edification and sent by return post. And still she struggled with turning in her Party card. In her memoirs Lessing often blames the undertow of history itself: if her feelings were neurotic, her thinking belonged to the "Zeitgeist." What she was always secretly hoping for, she writes, was the emergence of a few pure Russian souls to put the system back on its true path.

The most perplexing and dispiriting of her adventures, however, occurred when she came upon just such a soul, and the message was not what she wanted to hear. In 1952, while she was visiting the Soviet Union and touring a collective farm, a classic Tolstoyan old farmer in a white peasant smock stepped forward to cry out that everything the foreigners were being shown was false, that life under Communism was terrible, and that they must go back to Britain and tell the truth. Lessing now calls this the bravest act she had ever witnessed, since the old man had to know that "he would be arrested and disposed of." It is unclear how much she herself knew or was willing to know at the time. After a banquet and a viewing of "presents to Stalin from his grateful subjects," she went to sit outside, alone, and brood. And it was apparently her shame over her aesthetic revulsion at those hideous presents—mostly boxes and rugs featuring Stalin's carved or woven face—that led her to the macabre conclusion of this episode: her decision to write a story "according to the communist formula."

Insisting on one's belief in the face of all evidence; seeing and hearing what you need to be true instead of what, horribly, is; hanging on to what you know you cannot live without. And then letting it go. This memoir—like "The Golden Notebook"—is about the admission of colossal, sickening error and defeat. "All around me," Lessing recalls, "people's hearts were breaking, they were having breakdowns, they were suffering religious conversions" over the collapse of Communism as a moral force. She points almost gratefully to one of the century's awful paradoxes: that, while the politically negligent helped make Hitler possible, it was "the most sensitive, compassionate, socially concerned people" who did the same for Stalin. This is not offered as a defense, exactly, but as evidence of a kind of mass delusion, in which the only imperative was to believe in something larger than the single self.

"LOSING faith in communism is exactly paralleled by people in love who cannot let their dream of love go," Lessing writes. For her, the comparison is not abstract. She suffered two disastrous love affairs during the years covered here, long affairs that were more marriages than her marriages had been, and that left her feeling misused, empty, and nearly out of her mind with misery. In fact, she *was* misused, as she reports it—both here and, in far more excruciating detail, in "The Golden Notebook." She was lonely and in need and had read far too much D. H. Lawrence. But she was also a modern woman: she wasn't going to ask for anything that would make her seem wanting or weak. And the very modern "men-babies" that the age was producing certainly weren't going to give anything—there were now spoken rules about this—even as they pillaged her emotional store and absorbed all the loving and the cooking and the nursing and the sex that any sensible Victorian woman would have set at a far higher market price. No wonder she felt empty by the time they were sated and moved on.

"Sometimes I think we're all in a sort of sexual mad house," one of the shell-shocked women in "The Golden Notebook" remarks. "My dear," a friend replies, "we've chosen to be free women and this is the price we pay." As it happens, "Free Women" is the title of a book that Anna Wulf begins writing, and it is meant to be ironic. Lessing's women are not only willfully blind in their romantic delusions but—and this *is* the price they pay—deprived of any further use of their corrupted and exhausted wills. Like Lessing in her memoir, they have descended to the level where accepting pain is easier than taking responsibility.

What is most ironic of all, perhaps, is that "The Golden Notebook" has entered literary history as, in Lessing's words, the "Bible of the Women's Movement"—the novel that introduced the subject of women's liberation to American society. Lessing herself seems torn between laughter and tears at the thought. It is clearly her searching, shameless honesty that readers responded to so avidly; women had never talked like this in print before. But as a document of liberation her book may be classed with Simone de Beauvoir's "The Second Sex" (which in 1949 announced the "free woman" as a type just being born) and with Richard Wright's "Native Son." All three are works in which the angry subject is such a crippled specimen that hope and progress can be detected primarily in the sheer, howling relief of the author's declaration: If I am a monster, it is because you have made me one.

Lessing's heroines tend to break down completely before they are able to put themselves back together—perhaps on the Marxist model that revolution must precede utopia. The author informs us that she herself managed to escape real breakdown through writing about it. Through psychoanalysis, she came to understand that even her support of the Soviet Union was "only a continuation of early childhood feelings," primarily suffering and identification with pain. In Africa, in a house with mud walls and Liberty curtains, her mother had complained bitterly of the sacrifice of her own talents to the raising of two children. Lessing's strikingly exact reversal of that sacrifice did not ease the weight she carried. In her earlier memoir she skips ahead to let us know that her firstborn son, when a middle-aged man, told her that he understood why she'd had to leave his father, but that he still resented it. Her need to save the world—so much better an excuse for running off than domestic restlessness or the desire to write stories and novels—is not mentioned. Both this crusade and its failure, however, may help to explain why her stories and novels had to take on that moral burden.

But this isn't why they are worth reading. For all her theories and her ethics and the range of her literary personae—the African realist, the London scene painter, the anguished psychologist, the science-fiction galaxy roamer turning out volumes on "the fate of the universe"—Lessing's rarest gift is for getting characters on their feet and setting the wind stirring the curtains with language so apparently simple it betrays no method at all. Many of the short stories, in particular, seem to have written themselves. "Homage for Isaac Babel" renders adolescent tenderness and the psychology of literary style in three perfect pages; "The Day Stalin Died" and "How I Finally Lost My Heart" divide the weighty themes of "The Golden Notebook" and release them like birds into the air. The classical concision of the form seems to induce in Lessing a kind of clear-eyed mental energy, an urge to pick the locks of the elaborate cages she builds in her novels.

IT'S possible that what makes Lessing so fascinating a writer is the skewed alignment of her vision and her gifts. Here is a utopian humanist who cannot help seeing into the mixed and muddled cores of actual people; an apocalyptic town crier who is also one of modern fiction's most precise domestic realists—a Pieter de Hooch who can suddenly flare into Bosch. True, it can sometimes seem that apocalypse is merely her requirement for making a decision. (When a world is ending, it is surely time to pack your bags.) But the woman who now claims in her memoirs to have been borne through much of her life upon the tides of history, helpless and passive, has written a stack of books that entirely contradict this notion—books that are nothing if not the product of a hugely stubborn and struggling soul.

"I have to conclude that fiction is better at 'the truth' than a factual record," Lessing surmised in a new introduction to "The Golden Notebook," in 1993. As is true of most writers' memoirs, Lessing's are secondary events, their unvarnished truths of special interest only because of the beautifully painted half truths that have gained a hold on our imaginations. But with Lessing the usual paradox only begins here, for the fiction that details her personal and political failures also embodies her creative triumphs. "The Golden Notebook" may be a monument to disillusion and despair, but it remains a monument—one that stands for an era of formidable transition. At its end, Anna Wulf pulls herself together, joins the Labour Party, and begins to do volunteer work to ease her need to make all things better than they ever can be. Her steps seem small, sad, and honest. At the same point of emotional recovery in "Walking in the Shade," Lessing announces a newfound allegiance to Sufism, and the reader almost sighs at the sound of the authorial boots tramping off uphill again, in this spiralling Pilgrim's Progress of a life.

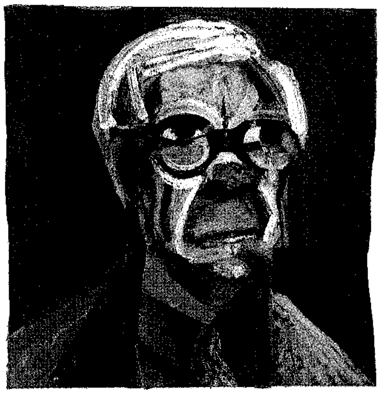
In a time with so little faith in the achievement of higher destinations, it is surely Lessing's ability to hold fast to her goal even as she records every stumble and collapse along the way which has made her work of near-inspirational value to so many. Oddly, Lessing the memoirist is unable to acknowledge this dual aspect of her appeal, and ends by belittling her own contribution. In "Walking in the Shade" she pronounces "The Golden Notebook" to be a failure, on the ground that even this most influential of her books hasn't really changed the way people think. Characteristically, the standards of judgment expressed in her fiction are more reasonable, even more forgiving.

In a slender novel called "The Memoirs of a Survivor," written in 1974 and called by the author "an attempt at autobiography," Lessing fused all her visions and gifts into a single ravishing fable. Set on several levels of reality, it tells of a woman who is mysteriously entrusted with a child to care for just as the civilization around her crashes down. Despite its fantastic elements, the tone is natural, the people are true, the language is taut and glowing. Near the end, the woman sits in the ruins of a London-like city and pictures a garden that is now out of reach, a place she visited briefly and believes that people will return to someday. "It was hard to maintain a knowledge of that other world, with its scents and running waters and its many plants, while I sat here in this dull shabby daytime room," she recalls. But then she goes on to assert, with quiet pride, just what Lessing might rightly claim for herself: "I did hold it. I kept it in my mind. I was able to do this." ♦

DEEP DISH

When O.J. was the rage and the cocktail circuit held court.

BY JEFFREY TOOBIN



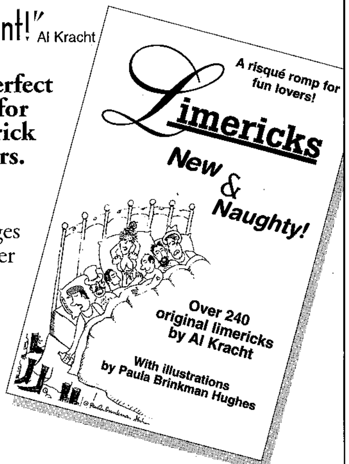
Dominick Dunne

ANDREA VENTURA

NEAR the end of the great journalism movie "Absence of Malice," a reporter, played by Sally Field, learns from a colleague that their newspaper is writing a story on her coverage of a well-known local businessman. The colleague then asks if it's true that Field and the businessman were involved. "No," Field replies. "But it's accurate." Dominick Dunne's new book about the O.J. Simpson saga is just the reverse: it's not always accurate, but it's completely true.

For those of us who covered Simpson's criminal trial, Dunne seemed to lead an unusually glamorous life. Often, he was the first to arrive in the pressroom, juggling a coffee cup, a handful of newspapers, and the New York gossip columns, which were faxed daily to his hotel room at the Chateau Marmont. The rest of us would drift in later and commence the time-honored journalistic whines about our irritated spouses and irritating bosses. Dunne was operating on another level. "You know," he'd whisper, "Nancy Reagan doesn't miss a word of the trial."

So everyone will learn in Dunne's "Another City, Not My Own" (Crown; $25), a lightly fictionalized autobiography that begins just after the double murders and ends just after O.J. Simpson's acquittal, sixteen months later. Dunne has wisely selected a unique niche for himself in the vast library of Simpsoniana. He virtually ignores what went on in the courtroom—thus sparing the world one more description of, say, Barry Scheck's cross-examination of Dennis Fung—and instead invites us to join him on his peripatetic social rounds. Dunne's previous books—"The Two Mrs. Grenvilles" and "People Like Us," among them—usually dramatized the clash between old money and new: what happens when Louis Auchincloss meets Judith Krantz. The new book, by contrast, is about a social world in which ancient tradition means Swifty Lazar's Oscar-night parties, and the only thing that establishes a sense of community is shared gossip. In the capital of anomie,



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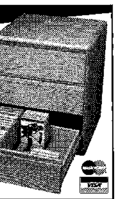

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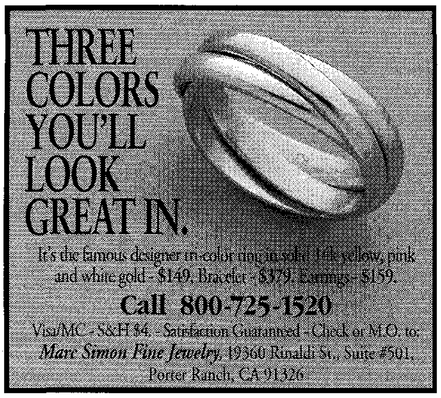
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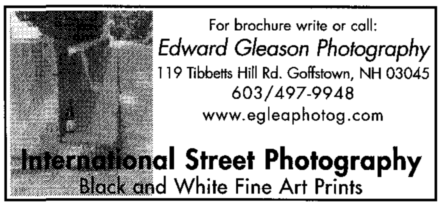
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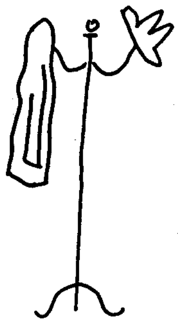
Dunne gives us the Simpson trial as social communion.

Oddly, the author uses almost everybody's real name except his own. Even though the protagonist is clearly Dunne himself, right down to having written Dunne's books, the author calls this fellow Augustus Bailey and kills him off at the end. Why? Beats me. The fictional touches only make this loony tale less vivid and less real. But Dunne has a terrific ear for dish—which is, suitably, a favorite word of his. He takes us to lunch with F. Lee Bailey at "21," dinner at Ray Stark's "beautiful white brick mansion" in Holmby Hills, supper at Drai's with Faye Resnick, one of the "fast-living, drug-taking, promiscuous B-crowd people with money." In the beau monde of O.J. obsessives, early access to Simpson scoops was the greatest social asset you could have—instant entrée to the most rarefied of circles. And every weekend during the trial Gus Bailey does indeed lunch with the former First Lady to discuss the week's developments—just before his regular briefings of Elizabeth Taylor.



"Another City, Not My Own" captures the moment when Department 103 of the Los Angeles Criminal Courts Building seemed like the center of the universe, and his description of the dinner at Ray Stark's makes the point neatly. It's shortly before the trial begins, and Stark is holding the dinner to introduce Marcia Clark to a group of Hollywood big shots. (A great detail: to deter thieves, Stark keeps a police car parked in his driveway at all times, but it's really just a prop from an old Aaron Spelling television series.) The stars gather—everyone from David Geffen to Kirk Douglas—and finally the guest of honor arrives at the door. "Everyone turned to the entrance of the living room, where Marcia Clark was standing, to look at her," he writes. "Stark's guests, all famous themselves, moved in to meet her, in the way they do at the great houses of Hollywood when stars like Barbra Streisand come to dinner. They crowded around her, eager to talk to her, eager to listen to her." Reading that passage now, one is struck not only by the intensity of sudden celebrity but also by its shrinking half-life. If the grandees from Stark's living room saw Marcia Clark at a party today, many of them would probably avert their eyes.

The scene also conveys a sense of Dunne's double life, as both participant in and observer of the social whirl. Although in the book the line between irony and reverence is not always clear, Dunne seems to recognize that he is both attracted to and appalled by all this self-important schmoozing. Certainly, it's a world he knows firsthand. Dunne (like his fictive alter ego) was a movie and television producer until the nineteen-seventies, when he fell into a mire of drinking, drugs, and debt. Thanks to A.A. and, later, to writing, as Bailey tells it, he rebuilt his life.

Dunne's tumultuous past seems to have made him an almost gentle person, with an unwillingness to judge others too harshly. The Simpson story had a vast and unseemly cast, but Dunne finds something nice to say about practically everyone—except the defendant himself. In 1982, his only daughter, Dominique, was murdered by an estranged boyfriend. The boyfriend escaped with minimal punishment, and Dunne's rage on the subject of murder is ever green. By Bailey's own admission, he becomes nearly unhinged when he realizes that Simpson is going to beat the rap, and that the Goldman and Brown families are going to suffer the way he did. Interviewed by CNN moments after the verdict, Bailey/Dunne bitterly proclaims, "What I think is that the jury is a disgrace, an absolute disgrace. . . . They just gave the middle finger to justice." To express himself in that way, at that moment, was reckless, irresponsible, unprofessional—and exactly right.

It's unnerving to imagine a world full of journalists playing by Dunne's rules: he takes sides, retails gossip, doesn't confirm everything he reports. One could come away from "Another City" thinking that O.J. was high on crystal meth at the time of the murder, and even that Andrew Cunanan played a role in the Brentwood mystery. These may just be tall tales, and yet a teller of tall tales may be the perfect chronicler for the case that had everything: movie stars and maids, high tragedy and low farce, and now, finally, truth and fiction. ◆

FICTION

Bob the Gambler, by Frederick Barthelme (Houghton Mifflin; $23). The big casinos have been in Biloxi, Mississippi, for a few years before Ray and Jewel Kaiser finally check out the Paradise, a gambling warehouse built on pilings off the coast and strangled in pink-and-lime neon—"a joke on itself, but the kind of joke you got used to." Sure enough, Ray, a lapsed architect, likes it a little too much, and soon he has blown a bundle and taken a job as second assistant manager at the Jitney Jungle grocery. But instead of despair he feels an odd sense of freedom. ("A retail tycoon in the making," Jewel calls him, in loving mockery.) The genius of Barthelme's jazzed-up comic art is to look at life's familiar, junky stuff and, by some act of affection, make it mysteriously new.

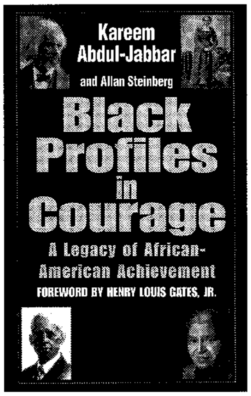
A Change of Climate, by Hilary Mantel (Owl; $12). In 1956, when Ralph Eldred and his wife, Anna, arrive in South Africa to work in a black-township mission, it is with earnest intentions of doing good and utter unawareness of indigenous cultures. Years later, the ghastly results still reverberate through their apparently peaceful and blameless life back in England, where Ralph administers a charitable trust and inflicts the objects of his charity on his and Anna's four children. This magnificent volume is powered by questions about faith, unfaithfulness, and how to live unselfishly without destroying yourself or those you love, and it does them unsettling justice.

California's Over, by Louis B. Jones (Pantheon; $24). Steve, a forty-year-old freelance college-essay grader in Marin County, gets an unexpected call from his first love, Wendy Farmican; when they last saw each other, in 1974, he called himself Baelthon. Over coffee at Starbucks, she tells him that they have a son, and that their spontaneous marriage, performed by a meddlesome surfer poet ("Merlin, sheesh. I do"), may be legal. The novel follows the repercussions of the characters' harebrained opportunism both then and now (seventies-era tax dodges, nineties hologram sculptures) and looks on their biggest mistakes with a tender acuity, as when Steve's estranged son tells him, "There's no hard feelings," and Steve's first thought is "Subject-verb agreement."

Road Rage: An Inspector Wexford Mystery, by Ruth Rendell (Crown; $25). Most of the things we worry about, Wexford observes, speaking in the role of paterfamilias, never happen. Right, but other things do: within pages, Wexford's wife, Dora, has been taken hostage by a group calling itself Sacred Globe, which demands that work be halted on a road bypass that would devastate the wild land around Wexford's beloved Kingsmarkham. Rendell's usual mission is to lay bare where evil abides; in this compelling tale she asks instead what damage the ordinary soul is willing to sustain for what the heart holds dear.

(Advt.)

The ability to hit, kick, pass or dribble a ball with proficiency is not enough to make someone a hero. True heroes are those whose deeds, dignity and courage serve as examples to inspire young lives. ***BLACK PROFILES IN COURAGE,*** written by former basketball great **Kareem Abdul-Jabbar**—a man who fits all of the above criteria—encourages young African-Americans to look beyond the ballfields and arenas for their role models; to take pride and motivation from the true stories of Joseph Cinque, Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, Lewis Latimer, and the scores of other black men and women who have been all too often ignored in the more traditional historical texts, yet whose accomplishments have greatly enriched our nation and our world. This is an ideal introduction to black history for all Americans—a book to edify and entertain children and their parents, students and educators.


Kareem Abdul-Jabbar
and Allan Steinberg
Black Profiles in Courage
A Legacy of African-American Achievement
FOREWORD BY HENRY LOUIS GATES, JR.

Novelist **Richard Grant** celebrates a different kind of heroism. The emotional strength of Pippa Rede, the protagonist of ***IN THE LAND OF WINTER,*** for example—a struggling single mother and gentle modern-day witch who must fight local bigots and a powerful government bureaucracy for the return of her stolen child. And then there's the moral courage of Tex and Molly, the unlikely heroes of ***TEX AND MOLLY IN THE AFTERLIFE***—a couple of aging Maine hippies whose social consciousness remains undimmed even after their sudden accidental deaths transport them to an alternate reality of ancient woodland sprites and angry forgotten deities. There is certainly nothing ordinary about the mind, the soul, and the art of Richard Grant, whom *The Washington Post* once proclaimed "either a genius or a madman." The magic in his storytelling is of the distinctly human variety: of the spirit and of the heart.

We'll talk again.

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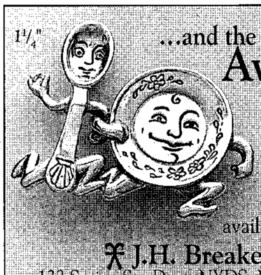

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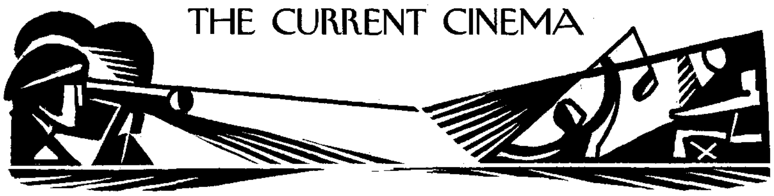


THE CURRENT CINEMA

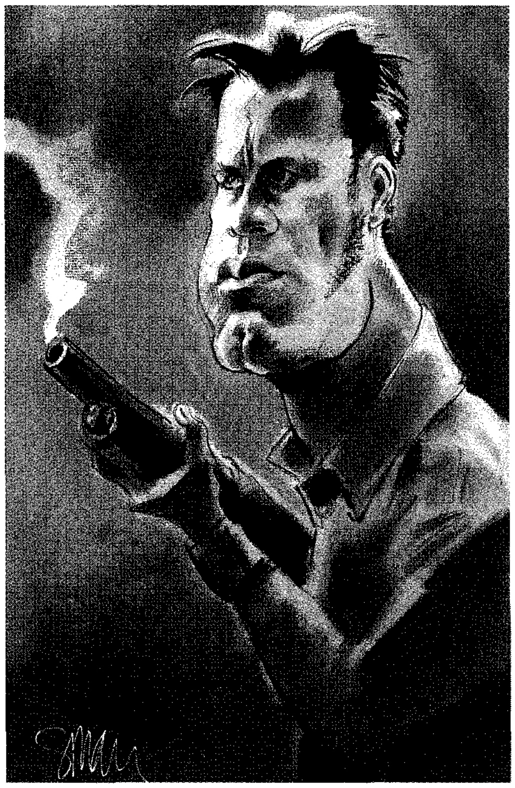
SHOOTING THE TRUTH

A media melodrama with a very straight face.

BY ANTHONY LANE

WOULD Larry King please stop appearing in Hollywood movies? Being engulfed by that froggy grin on TV is bad enough without having to face it on a movie screen as well. When I heard that Larry was in "Contact," I vaguely hoped that he might be torn in two and eaten alive by giant, ravening bugs, but all he did was ask tough, earnest questions about the difficulty of communicating with an alien intelligence—something that Larry's guests have to cope with every night. Next week, you can catch him in "The Jackal," and this week he pops up in "Mad City," a prolonged attack on the invasive and trivializing impact of the modern media. It may be just me, but does anyone else glimpse the tiniest flicker of irony here?

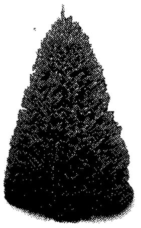
The picture was written by Tom Matthews and directed by Costa-Gavras, an old master of issues movies. He is best known for "Z" and "Missing," and his last American work, "Music Box," delved into the legacy of Nazi war crimes. This time, in "Mad City," the focus of his concern is Sam Baily (John Travolta), a museum guard in Madeline, California. When Sam is fired by his boss, Mrs. Banks (Blythe Danner), on the not unreasonable ground that you need only so much manpower to defend a stuffed bear and a few shelves of rocks, he goes ape. Given the simian, not to say Neanderthal, performance from the side-burned Travolta, this is an unsurprising development. Sam locks himself and Mrs. Banks in the museum, together with a schoolteacher, a bunch of oddly fearless children, a shotgun, and one of those big bags of dynamite that used to be regularly delivered by the Acme Company to the home of a Mr. Coyote. Also present, and no less volatile, is Max Brackett (Dustin Hoffman), a TV reporter who was once a net-work name but is now reduced to covering the miniature scandals of Madeline. The only reason he stumbles into this story is that he spent too long in the men's room.



Too much manpower: Travolta goes ape as a disgruntled museum guard in "Mad City."

From the start, you can see where the picture is heading: the opening sequence is an extended visual pun on the fact that reporters, with their long lenses and boom mikes, look like armed robbers preparing for a heist. It's crisply done, and Costa-Gavras still has a talent for racking up the tension, but the technical deftness keeps getting squashed by the

DAVID SMALL



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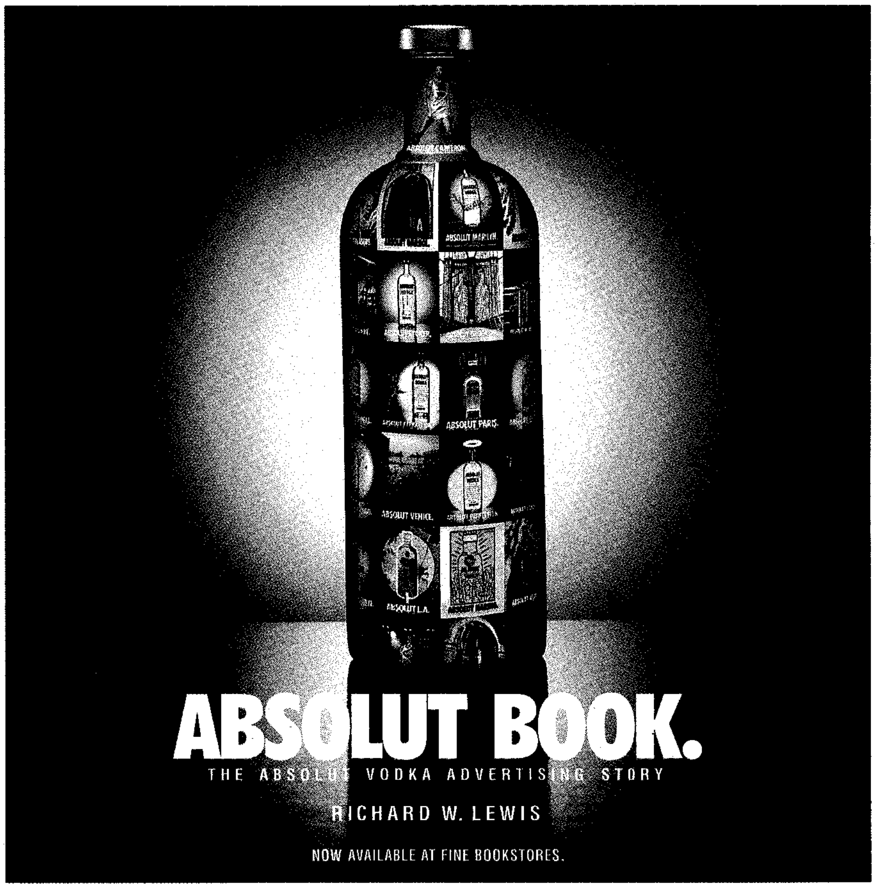
cumbersome burden of the argument: television robs our souls, strips us of our dignity, and all the rest of it. As with the 1976 "Network," you can't help wondering whether Hollywood is ideally placed to castigate the corrupting aesthetic of another medium. (The only thing worse than a movie that lashes out at TV is a movie that snuggles up to it: do you know anyone who wasn't covering his eyes, blocking his ears, and stuffing a handkerchief into his mouth by the end of "Up Close and Personal"?) If people must shoot films on this treacherous ground, then the only solution, I suspect, is to play it hard and fast; the hell-for-leather exchanges of "His Girl Friday," poised somewhere between tap dance and machine gun, were intended not merely to rattle our eardrums but to suggest that the problem of press manipulation, though a serious subject, was not *so* serious that we needed to go all moony about it.

"Mad City" grows moonier by the minute. You sense the actors, especially Hoffman, hunting for comic possibilities that the director, with increasing stubbornness, refuses to offer. There are times in the first half of the film when Hoffman flashes that quick, snaky smile of his—the one that he deployed when he and Robert Redford were doorstepping the conspirators in "All the President's Men." Redford kept *his* smile on full beam, but Hoffman switched his friendliness on and off like a flashlight. You were dazzled by the insincerity, and it's good to see him try it out on Travolta, although Sam Baily is too plain dumb—too easy a target—for the professional smart-ass. When Max urges Sam to release a black kid, "so that it's harder to play the race card against you," there's a shiver in the line; what could be more fun than a cynic who covers all the angles, defusing outrage before it blows? For a while, Costa-Gavras seems ready to relax his principles and give Max, the movie's resident devil, at least some of its best tunes, but that's too much to hope for. The tune that really kills this movie is the weepy guitar fingering that starts up when Max puts a microphone in Sam's face, live on national television, and Sam begins to air the wounded sorrows of "guys like me."

Such plaintiveness is all part of Max's



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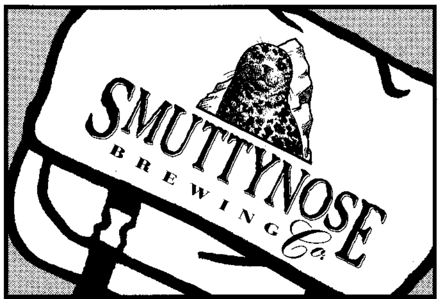

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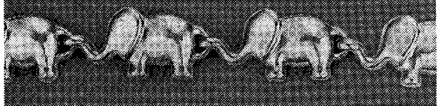

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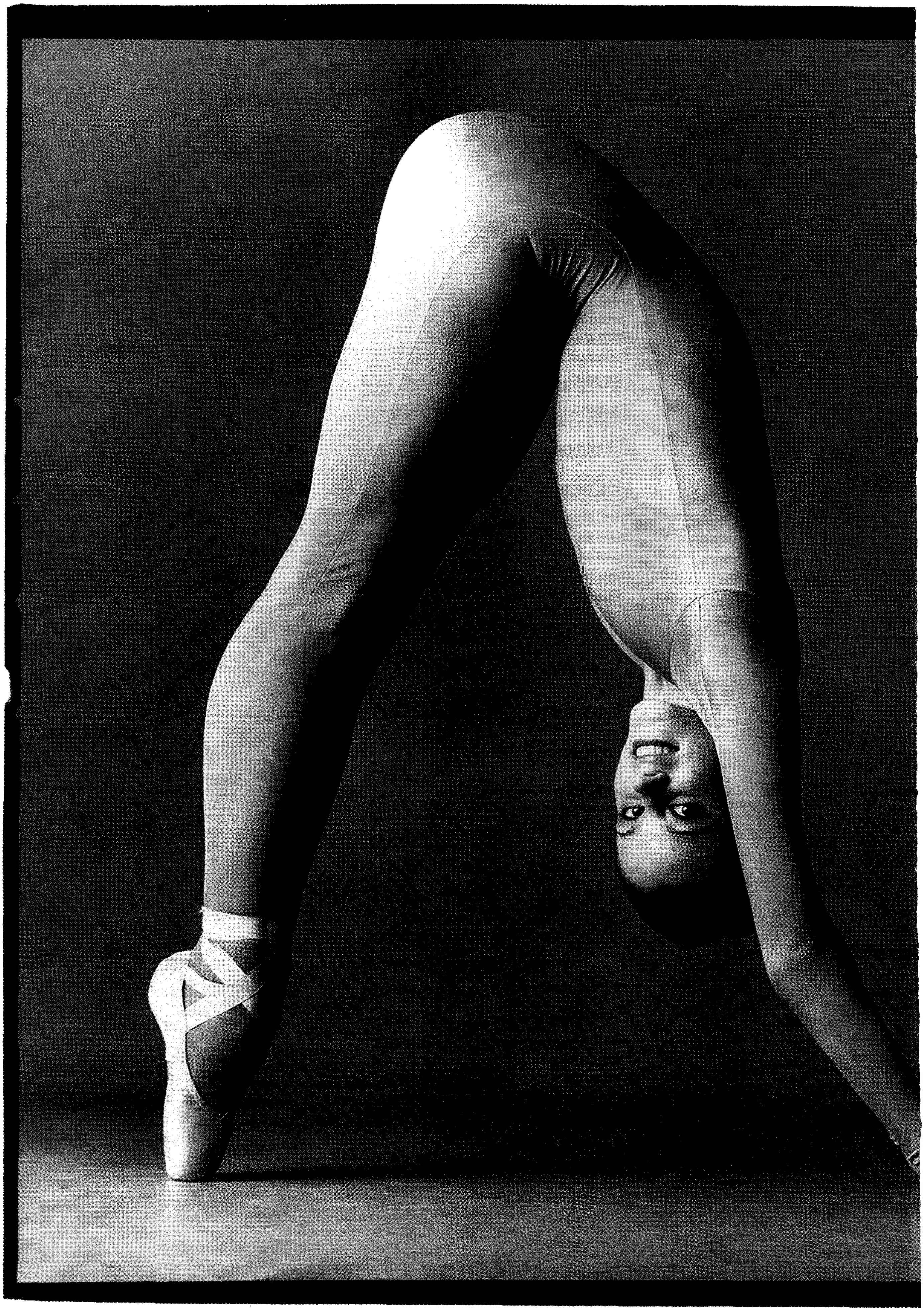

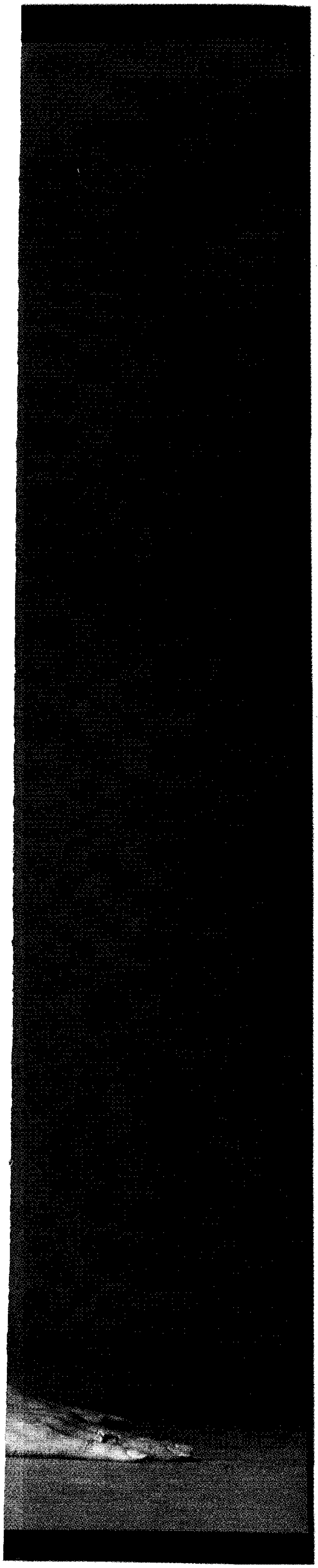

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Merrill Ashley joined New York City Ballet in 1967, became a principal dancer in 1977, and will retire with a farewell performance on November 25, 1997. The symmetry of those dates says a lot about her: she does nothing that isn't aligned with something else—that isn't balanced, finished, rhymed, and polished to perfection. Merrill Ashley made the design of classical dancing her special province as a performer. Through her beautifully shaped legs and steel-sprung feet we saw Balanchine's steps in all their Euclidean clarity; as she penetrated deeper into the design, we saw the whole body in motion, head to foot, as paradigm, as syllogism, its tender logic unfolded with the precision of time-lapse photography.

In "Ballo Della Regina," Ashley danced choreography that Balanchine made for her. It is full of swift diagrammatic insights that were possible only with her: diamond-sharp landings on point in plié; échappés escaping to some unknown outer limit (outréchappés, you might call them); a curving belt-shaped leap that buckled and unbuckled itself in midair. Most prodigious of all was a rapid descent from high développé à la seconde to a kneel, with the leg pausing three times in passé on the way down, bang on the music. It was the greatest passé ever seen, and had the fans babbling for weeks.

Passé! Développé! Échappé! The amount of technical information downloaded in an Ashley performance might have been intolerable had it not been for the communicative phenomenon that was Ashley herself. At her greatest, the rhymes and syllogisms were crystallizations of the most delirious happiness a human being can feel. And, unlike some other dancers who retire to teach full time, she does not leave herself behind on the stage. Technique for her is not only the art, as Balanchine used to say; it's the very zest of life.

—Arlene Croce

Merrill Ashley, New York, 1979.

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plan. He will continue as the sole source of information from the museum, act as a go-between with the police, and advise Sam on the niceties of media presentation. In so doing, he may even get back at Kevin Hollander (Alan Alda), an old adversary who is now a national anchorman and wants the story served up on his own plate. (It's clever of Costa-Gavras to spot just how venomous Alda's charm can be, but it would have been cleverer if Woody Allen hadn't got there first, in "Crimes and Misdemeanors.") You sit and wait for the plot to flip over: Max has to get screwed—it's just a question of how, and when. Even I wasn't ready, though, for the terrible turn that events finally take: Max becomes nice. Having spent most of the movie putting a convenient spin on Sam Baily, selling a dangerous hick as an aggrieved working-class hero, he suddenly starts to swallow his own line. "It's not an angle," he pleads. "It's the truth." The what?

Even more ridiculous is the makeover of Laurie (Mia Kirshner), the interne at Max's TV station: she starts the day as a giggling, T-shirted innocent and ends it in a brisk red jacket, muscling other journalists aside to reach the beleaguered Max, who took a fall and has blood crawling down his forehead. "Don't wipe it," she tells him. "It looks good." Unlike the blood, this won't wash. On the one hand, Costa-Gavras wants us to sweat the movie out, to gag on the probings and posturings of newsmen; on the other hand, he himself does a number on us, begging us to believe in the high-speed conversions of a sinner who sees the light and of an ingénue who develops a taste for dirt. "Mad City" is, in other words, a slab of straight-faced melodrama—as inappropriate a form as you could hope to find for the impeachment of television, which itself is grievously skilled at pumping up the humdrum into the histrionic. Costa-Gavras might well argue that, while his message may not be new, it is at least newly urgent—that the impressive levels of lunacy that were attained in the course of the O.J. trial demand a yet more vigorous diagnosis, and perhaps even a little shock treatment. But "Mad City" isn't shocking enough; you watch it and shrug, as if you'd seen it all before. Don't tell Larry, but this picture is old news. ♦

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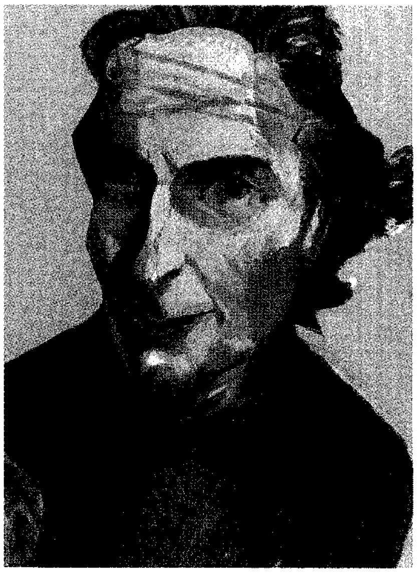
MUSICAL EVENTS

GO WEST

Michael Tilson Thomas gives San Francisco a symphonic high.

BY ALEX ROSS

GEORG SOLTI died at the end of the summer, and half a musical century died with him. He was the last major conductor to come of age in the European cultural paradise that disintegrated during the Second World War, and he was the last of the steely Middle European émigrés who molded American orchestral life in the postwar era. He should be mourned, but unsentimentally. His performances had great urgency; he was a titan of rhythm. (His voice rings out again in his engaging "Memoirs," just published by Knopf.) At the same time, he was relentless in his quest for precision, and he did not let the music sing as much as might have been expected from a seasoned opera conductor—particularly one who urged colleagues to "make music in a way that breathes." I reflected on his mixed legacy recently as I listened to the Chicago Symphony play the Tchaikovsky Fourth in Carnegie Hall. The Chicago remains a stupendous collective instrument, and that evening Daniel Barenboim made the most of its virtues, with a wide beat that drove home every accent and crescendo. The concert began with a tribute to Solti, who led the Chicago for more than two decades; the tribute was apt, because Solti tended toward exactly this kind of big, brilliant, quasi-brutalistic music-making.



Tilson Thomas is making the orchestra a mirror of the city.

An orchestra is an odd organism, a mutation of normal musical life. Song and opera, choral and chamber music are the forms with the longest pedigrees. Opera right now is the liveliest of the older musical arts in this country, and the reason for its health may be its communal feeling. Opera fans act as if they were at a show, not a ceremony; they interrupt with displays of enthusiasm or displeasure. Orchestras, by contrast, have prided themselves on uniform displays of power, and the audience has been uniform as well. It's not surprising that orchestras now find themselves in a state of crisis: since the heyday of Toscanini, in the nineteen-thirties, they have had an inflated and isolated role in American musical life. They will rebound once they find a more flexible way of participating in the culture. It's a sign of the times that the most opulent orchestral sound on this continent can be found not in a concert hall but in an opera pit—the Met's.

Before the Carnegie season opened, I was in San Francisco, attending concerts and rehearsals of the city's symphony, and talking to the music director, Michael Tilson Thomas. Regular pilgrimages to California have become necessary for anyone who means to keep track of the national scene. The Eastern bias of American music—monu-

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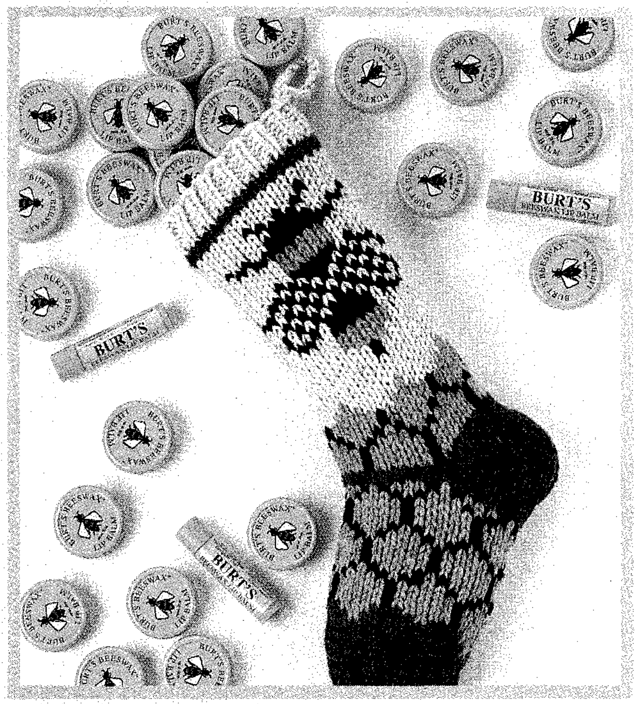

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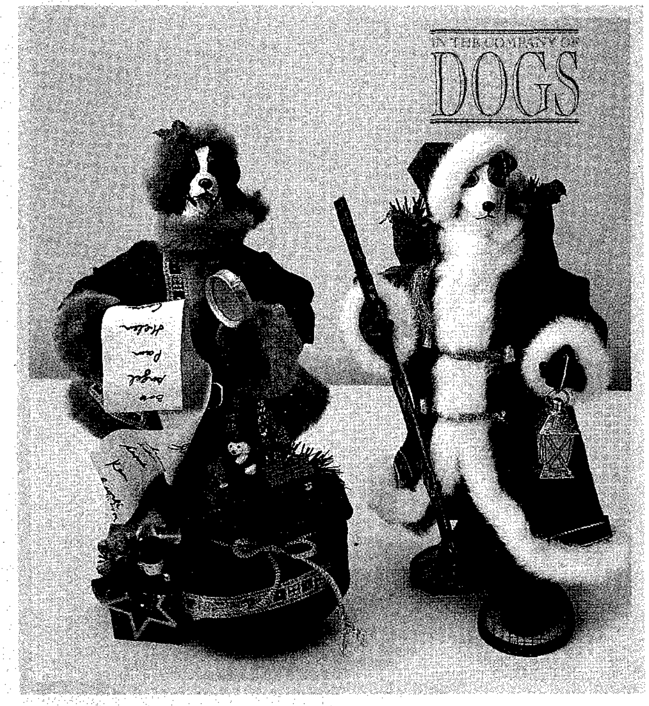

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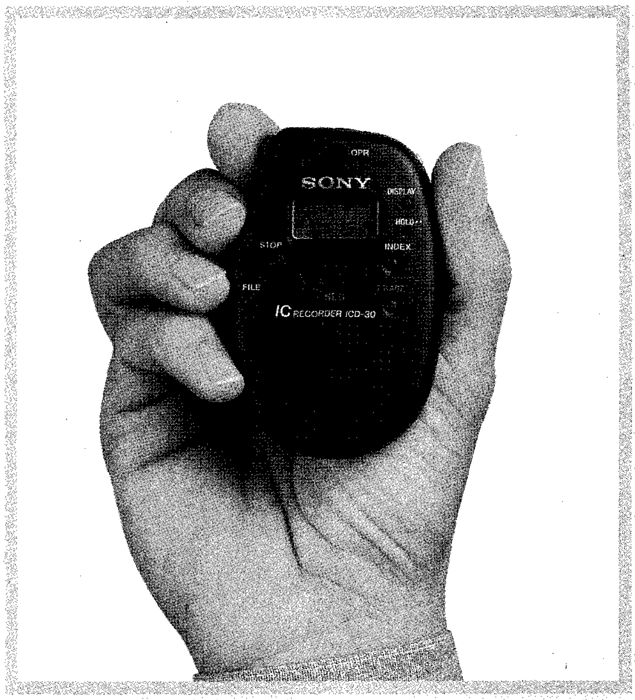

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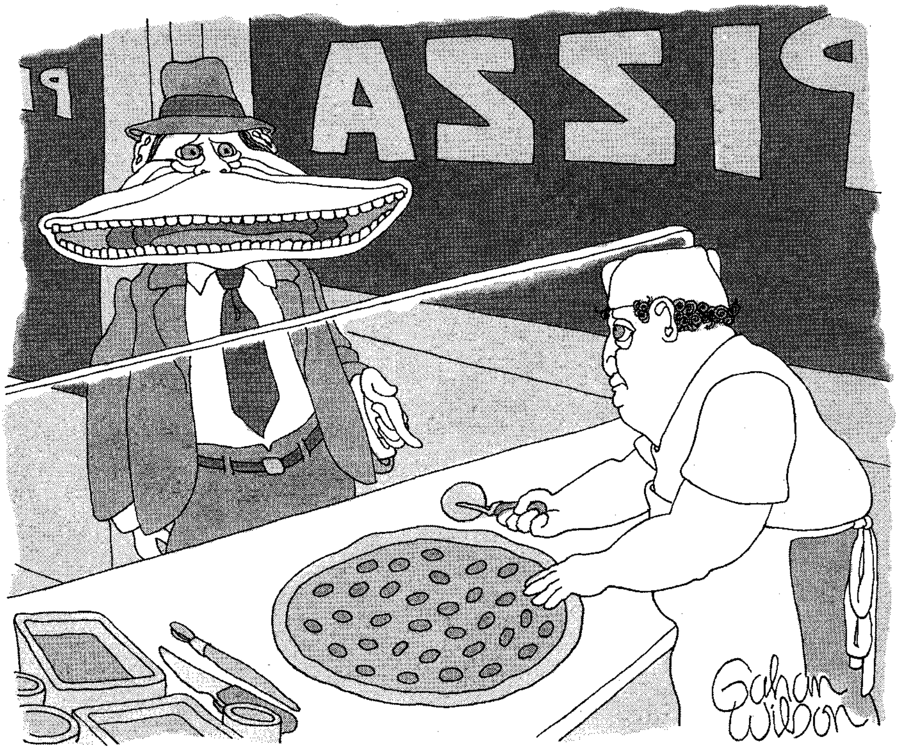

"I'd just as soon it wasn't cut into those funny little pieces, if you don't mind."

counts, the reporters pushed forward, demanding comment from his parents. "If there were any justice, my son would be in the hospital and I'd be in jail" was all that Big John could say.

After the verdict, Anne-Marie held out one last, vain hope. There was a possibility that prison officials would send Young John to the state hospital for the criminally insane at Bridgewater, Massachusetts, where he might get help. In the end, despite Carney's entreaties, John was sent to the state prison in Walpole. During the initial three-month classification process at the Concord prison, he spent much of the time in isolation; the only psychiatric doctor to see him during that time did so out of curiosity. Young John had become the man nobody wanted to know. In the opinion of his attorneys, for the state to offer psychiatric treatment would only have supported the defense's appeal; it was easier for them to ignore his mental illness, to keep it secret.

IN late summer, Walpole was hot: the prisoners roasted under a glass atrium. Later, when the fall of 1996 turned cold, so did the prison. John didn't have enough warm clothes, and Anne-Marie called and requested permission to give him some. No, she was told; she couldn't give him the clothes unless he filled out a request form. "But he *can't* ask for them," she said. "He's too sick!" In one of Young John's letters to her, he described a method for cutting into a vein, inserting a tube, and blowing air into it to cause a massive stroke. Another message took the form of a catechism: "Did you ever experience suffocation then being suffocated? Yes, during my probably fourteenth year living I did request my cousin too tie me then suffocate me using a plastic bag and elastic during sufficient time too allow myself too be unconscious."

The last time Anne-Marie saw her son alive was during a visit she paid him on a cold day in October. Very thin, he was wearing two soiled T-shirts. He was bruised and his eyes were blackened, and he was afraid. "Mom," he said, "this is a scary place."

On the night of November 28th, Anne-Marie prayed before going to bed, "Dear God, if it's not in Your will to heal this terrible tragedy, please take Young John in your arms, and into heaven." The next morning, she got a

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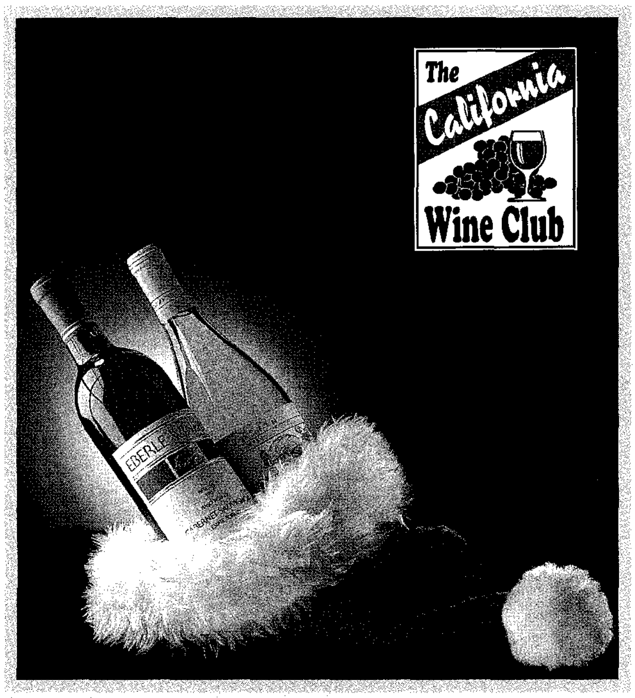

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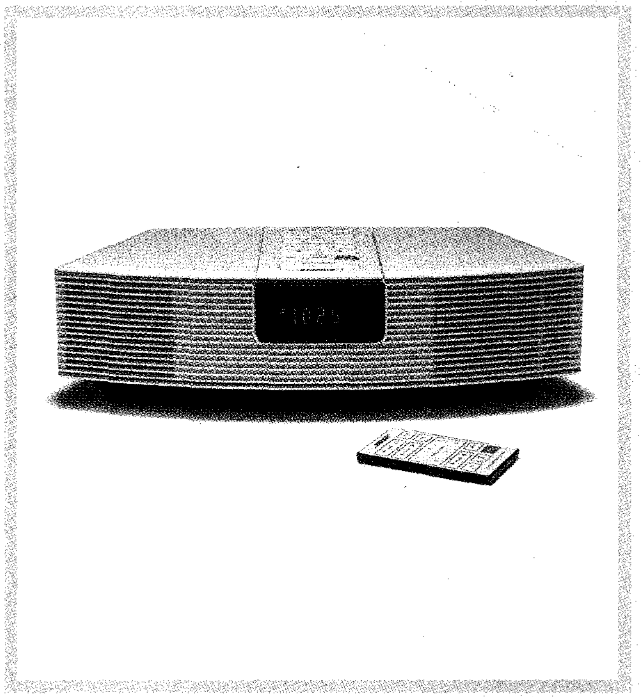

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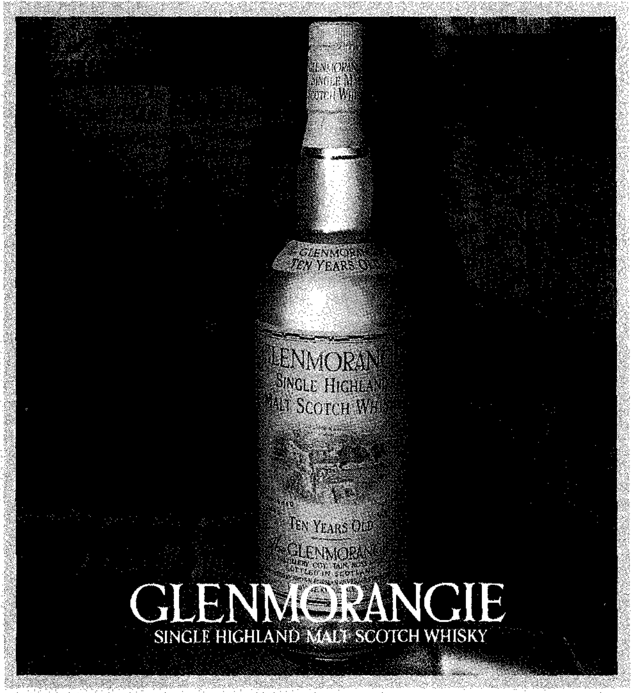
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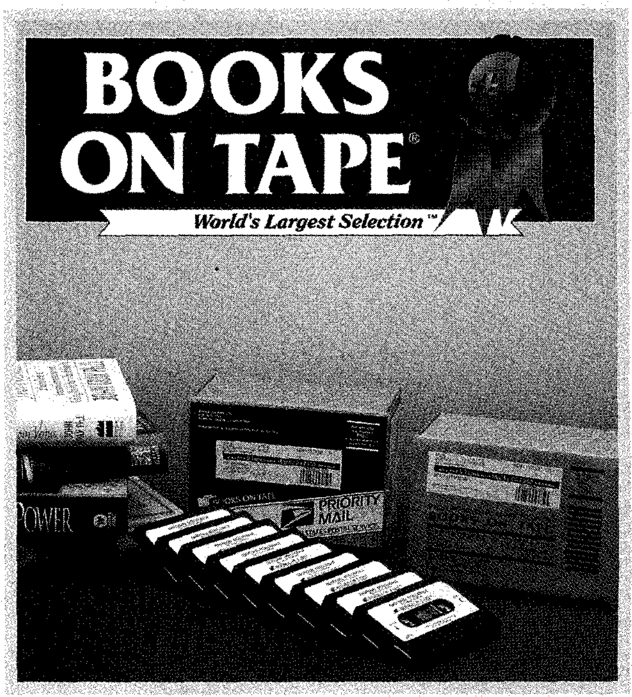
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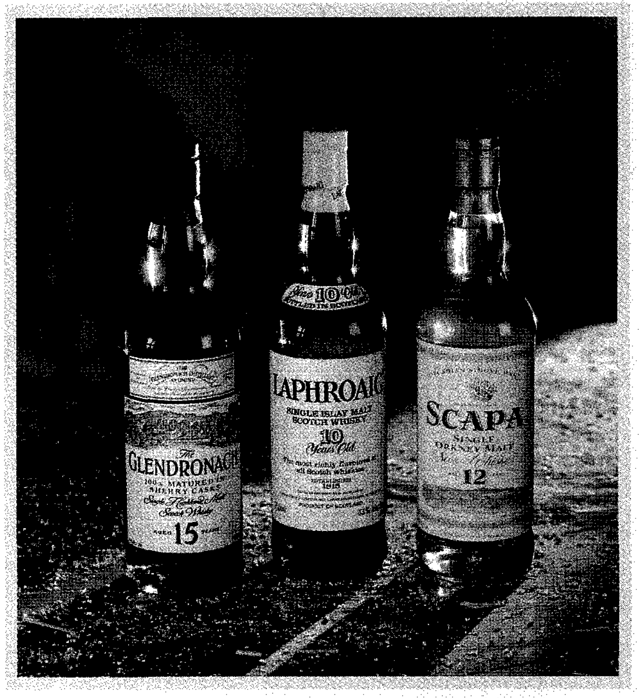
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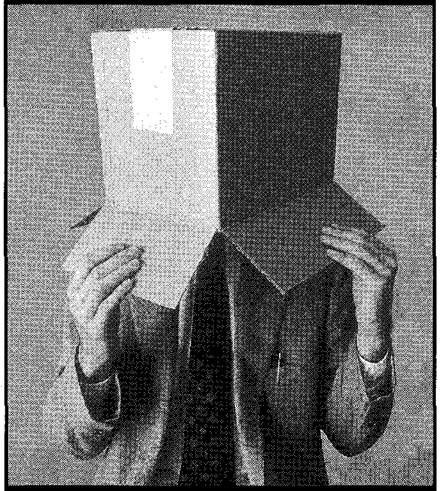

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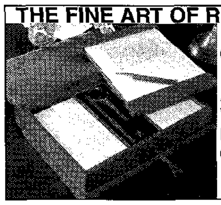

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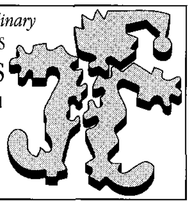

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HELENE

Here we are on the other side.
There were expeditions. Demesnes were leased out. Steam rose from the cinders.
It must be Helene over there, dancing between the flames.
Perhaps she knows now the secret of particular existence.
All my life in vain I tried to comprehend it.
You suffered much, Helene, and said nothing.
Hungry, you didn't even ask for help.
And hospitals, that bodily misery wanting to love itself,
Hating itself, it weeps in a dirty hallway.
Who would have thought, Helene, that our youth would turn out this way?
The garden glowed in the sun, and summer lasted forever.
Later for a long time we learn how to bear what is borne by others.
And how to bless a moment if it is without pain.

—CZESLAW MILOSZ

(*Translated, from the Polish, by the author and Robert Hass.*)

mentalized by the false cliché of a Big Five group of orchestras, in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Cleveland, and Chicago—is collapsing under pressure from the West. It's not that these five orchestras have gone into decline: they still put a handsome frame around the nineteenth-century repertory. But they do not deliver surprises, and they do little to reflect the cities and cultures in which they live. The great Midwestern orchestras, in Cleveland and Chicago, are bolder: their programming shows an awareness that the twentieth century is happening, not to mention ending. But San Francisco has gone further and done the job better.

THESE are palmy days for Michael Tilson Thomas. I visited him in his music room, on the top floor of a large house near Pacific Heights. Through a plate-glass window you could see oil tankers inching through the thin, bright fog of the Bay. Tilson Thomas talked up his many projects on various coasts, as conductors tend to do: his programming in San Francisco; his projects with the New World Symphony, a topnotch training orchestra based in Florida; his composing, to which he is devoting more time. He also went off on lively tangents, telling stories about his favorite composers. He recalled the wicked wit of Morton Feldman, whose music he has recorded for a future album. In Buffalo, in the seventies, a student once made the mistake of showing Feldman his score—an ultramodern affair, with spacey notation and fold-out sheets. Tilson Thomas told me, "Morty paged back and forth, unfolded this and that. Somewhere in there he found a chord, and he tapped his finger on it. 'This chord,' he said, '*dis choid right heah*' "—imagine a Brooklyn accent and Catskills timing—" 'needs a cowbell.' "

Tilson Thomas is a superb storyteller, and he uses that skill as a means of putting across unfamiliar music like Feldman's. He often gives short lectures from the podium. In rehearsal, he sings, hums, tells stories, and invents cute metaphors. (The passage in Beethoven's Seventh in which instruments try out the note E in different registers reminds him of a wine-tasting, he says, and he asks, "Which E should I send back?") He comes from a showbiz background: his paternal grandfather, Boris Thomashefsky, was one of the founders of the Yiddish theatre in America, and his father worked in Hollywood. His style was also inspired by that ultimate showman Leonard Bernstein. A reputation for imitating Bernstein dogged Tilson Thomas in the seventies and the eighties. He really came into his own only when he took over the London Symphony, in 1988, and returned the orchestra to the first rank.

None of this quite prepared audiences for Tilson Thomas's raucous first season in San Francisco, in 1995. Outdoing even his contemporary-minded colleague at the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Esa-Pekka Salonen, he unloaded reams of twentieth-century music and turned again and again to American names. The truly startling development was the two-week American Festival he held at season's end. A marathon concert of avant-garde showpieces was capped by a dissonant jam session in which Tilson Thomas joined surviving members of the Grateful Dead. No one who was there will forget the sight of Davies Hall overrun with Deadheads, or the sound of them cheering Varèse's "Ionisation" and Henry Cowell's "Quartet Euphometric." Most wonderfully, the festival lacked the condescension that so often poisons classical-pop crossover schemes. It was an authentically festive day—topsy-turvy, at times sublime. June festivals on different themes have become a channel for Tilson Thomas's enthusiasms, and their spirit derives in part from last-minute, improvised programming. They counter the predictability of American orchestral life, which is usually dictated years in advance by the sidereal motions of soloists.

During the American Festival, I had wondered if any of this excitement could remain on humdrum subscription nights. So this fall I went out to hear two average programs. One had Olly Wilson's new, Stravinskyish "Shango Memory," Rachmaninoff's Fourth Concerto (with Jean-Yves Thibaudet), and Sibelius's Second Symphony. The other had Copland's Orchestral Variations, Bartók's Second Violin Concerto (with Kyoko Takezawa), and the Beethoven Seventh. The orchestra sounds magnificent. Brilliant brass and winds, mainstays of the American style, are balanced by warm, rich-hued strings. Tilson Thomas has certainly given the orchestra his imprint, but it's hard to describe. Comparisons to Bernstein are nonsensical, because in temperament Tilson Thomas is almost his opposite. His style is bright-toned, pointed in rhythm, devoted to the melodic line. It's really Franco-Russian, as you'd expect from someone who once worked with Stravinsky. (Bernstein, for all his

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jazz panache, was Germanic.) Tilson Thomas is an extraordinarily effective conductor of Debussy, and also of Tchaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, and, of course, Stravinsky. His Mahler, which can be heard in recordings of the Third Symphony and "Das Klagende Lied," has a refreshing naturalness, an ease of flow through the required alarms and explosions. You hear Mahler's nature painting, his reminiscences of old and popular styles, his festal chants and midnight song.

The Beethoven was not the best thing I have heard Tilson Thomas do. It had beautiful things in it: fastidiously inflected singing lines, just-so sustained chords in the clipped main theme of the slow movement, and a stepwise attack in the finale. But it showed a few seams between excellent passages; it suffered in comparison with the utterly right-sounding Beethoven served up by Tilson Thomas's predecessor, Herbert Blomstedt. (I lived in the Bay Area in 1990 and 1991 and heard his concerts then.) Still, the subscribers had no reason to feel shortchanged. The San Francisco audience is divided between young, educated types and a sturdy Old Guard, who can cough and mutter as loudly as any New York audience when unfamiliar names crop up on the program. Tilson Thomas has found that a few quick remarks from the podium can dispel the fears of both groups. He also has a repertoire of gestures that seem designed to keep the tone-deaf engaged—the kick of a leg here, a baseball-bat swing of the baton there, and, at one point, a motion of the arm like a bandleader's on parade. Such antics invite derision, but they are not self-promotions, as Bernstein's sometimes were; they point up events in the music.

TILSON THOMAS'S real strength is in the twentieth century. Some three-quarters of the music he conducts this season was written in the last hundred years: classics by Stravinsky, Bartók, Copland, and Carl Ruggles, together with more recent pieces by Takemitsu, Leon Kirchner, and Lukas Foss. He gravitates toward vivid, distinct personalities; he is less impressed by quickly passing trends or by gradually snowballing reputations. "Viva Voce," a recent book of interviews with him, contains a critique of the music of Elliott Carter that encapsulates a whole theory of modern music: "I love the first seven minutes of most of his pieces, but after that point I feel that it's time for him to make a move toward us, as audience members. This is something that Berg and Ives did so well." And he told me, "What has contributed to the success I've had here is that I'm not a believer in only one kind of music. Audiences have had an outdated, stereotyped idea of what contemporary music is. We need to get back some of the excitement—the excitement of not knowing what we are about to hear. Our deal is to listen to this music and make the call to the future about whether we want to hear it again."

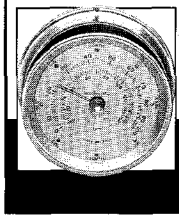
Could Tilson Thomas have had this success with any American orchestra? A measure of it, probably. But in San Francisco he has found a powerful ally in the audience itself, which is more willing than the average East Coast crowd to make its own turn toward the music that Tilson Thomas cherishes. He has certainly brought in listeners: a marketing study has shown that many new concertgoers are under the age of thirty-five. Then again, San Francisco has always had a broad-based, ardent attachment to culture, has always lazily dreamed of a kind of European greatness. As in so many European cities, the opera and the symphony are physically central, right opposite City Hall; and, as in so many European cities, the concertgoing public is divided in its fashions between radical chic and immovable conservatism. The orchestra is not an anachronism but a mirror of the city's many faces. The conductor has capitalized on this creative tension in the audience. Tilson Thomas's achievement in San Francisco, like the light that plays off the fog, will not travel to other places. Those of us in other places will have to travel there to see it. We will not complain. ♦

CONSTABULARY NOTES FROM ALL OVER

[*From the Eugene* (*Ore.*) *Register-Guard*]

The five people who abducted an Oregon toddler here last weekend demanded five kilos of cocaine as well as $50,000 for the boy's safe return, according to court documents.

"The demand for narcotics raises our suspicion that there could be drugs involved" in the case, said police spokesman Capt. Doug Chambers.



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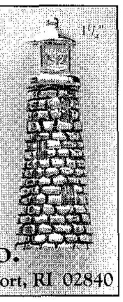

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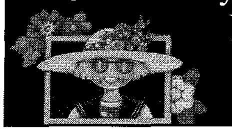

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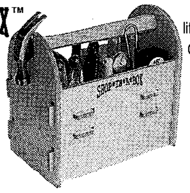

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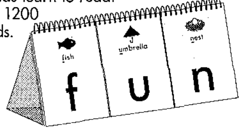

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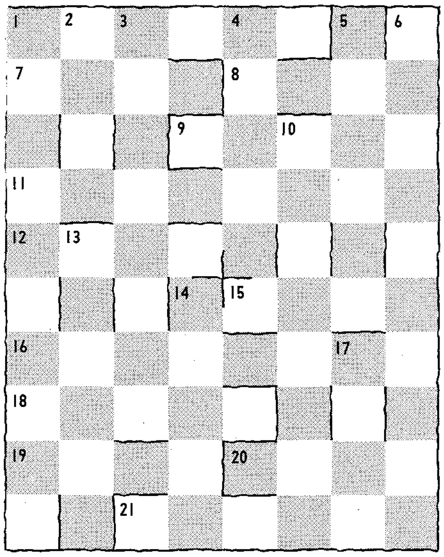

ACROSS

- 1 Suggest past chief of police is covered with acne (6)
- 7 Confused Oakland athletes eat endlessly (4)
- 8 I empty out a letter (4)
- 9 Forthcoming Paton novel (2,3)
- 11 Counter brought attention to cakes and pies (8)
- 12 Fighter pilot brought round hospital for pain (4)
- 15 Retro video-game system loses its freshness (4)
- 16 Blows up generals in a riot (8)
- 18 Bald stranger has one spontaneous comment (2,3)
- 19 Steals from Mr. Lowe and Mr. Reiner (4)
- 20 Legendary ship's freight not opened (4)
- 21 Large German city in decline (6)

DOWN

- 1 Animals face wet ears (5,5)
- 2 Tropical spot is left empty (4)
- 3 Military building employed in "War Games" shallowly (8)
- 4 Tells stories about northern routes (5)
- 5 Susan takes time at sculpture (6)
- 6 Group discussion cast aspersions (3,7)
- 10 Fires one of those shipworkers (8)
- 13 Type of complex, rare bird (6)
- 14 I say, "Demolish and build" (5)
- 17 Acclaimed genius maintains advantage (4)

• •

The solution to puzzle No. 21 appears on page 103. For a free copy of "The New Yorker's Guide to Solving Cryptic Crosswords," please send your fax number or a stamped, self-addressed envelope to "Solvers' Guide," The New Yorker, 20 West 43rd Street, New York, N. Y. 10036.

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What are the facts?

A recap of history. Some thumbnail history may be in order. Large numbers of Jews have been living in these territories since biblical times. Most of the Arabs living there are in fact relative newcomers. "Palestine" is the entire area now covered by Israel including Judea/Samaria (the so-called "West Bank") and what is now the Kingdom of Jordan. It originally also included the Golan Heights, which later, in an agreement between England and France, were ceded to France, and to Syria as the successor in possession. In 1922, contrary to the Mandate of the League of Nations, the British severed the entire area east of the Jordan and gave it to the Hashemite Arabs for their assistance in World War I. Thus, fully 75% of Palestine, all of which under the Mandate and under the terms of the Balfour Declaration was meant to be a home for the Jewish people, was lost for that purpose. Only the area west of the Jordan River was left for the Jewish homeland.

"Why should the Arab countries and the 'West Bank' be the only places in the world where Jews are not allowed to live?"

How the West Bank became "Arab country." In 1947, after decades of strife between Arabs and Jews, the British decided to relinquish the Mandate. The UN stepped in and proposed a partition plan under which the country (west of the River) was to be divided into respective Arab and Jewish areas. Jerusalem was to be internationalized. The Jews accepted the plan; the Arabs refused it out of hand. In 1948, on the twice truncated territory allotted to them by the U.N., the Jews declared their independence and the state of Israel was born. On the same day, six Arab armies invaded the new-born state. In what can be described as an almost biblical miracle, the Jews defeated them. When an armistice was finally secured, however, TransJordan remained in possession of Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank") and the eastern part of Jerusalem; Egypt remained in possession of the Gaza Strip. TransJordan renamed itself Jordan.

The Six-Day War. Once in possession of the "West Bank" and eastern Jerusalem, the Jordanians promptly proceeded to expel all Jews and systematically to desecrate and to destroy most Jewish sacred places, cemeteries and houses of worship. No Jews, regardless of citizenship were allowed into the "West Bank," eastern Jerusalem, the locale of the Western Wall, the holiest site in Judaism. In 1967, Egyptian president Abdel Nasser, joined by the same array of Arab armies that had unsuccessfully tried to destroy Israel at its birth in 1948, launched another war against Israel "to drive the Jews into the sea" and into oblivion, once and for all. But the Israelis utterly defeated the combined Arab might in the Six-Day War, one of the greatest military victories in history. When the dust of war settled, the Israelis had not only retained their national territory, but had *repossessed the territories of Judea/Sumaria (the "West Bank")*, the eastern part of Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights and had totally occupied Egypt's vast Sinai Peninsula.

It is clear from this short history that Israel's claim to the "West Bank" is far stronger than that of the Arabs. It's only by constant repitition that the world has come to think of these territories as "occupied Arab land." About 200,000 Jews now live in these territories. And why shouldn't they? Why should the Arab countries and the "West Bank" be the only places in the whole world where Jews cannot live? How can 200,000 Jews living among one million Arabs be "an obstacle to peace?" Over one million Arabs live in Israel. They are citizens, they have every civil right, and of course have nothing to fear from their Jewish fellow citizens. Certainly, nobody considers them an obstacle to peace.

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SHOUTS & MURMURS

A PUBLIC APOLOGY

BY STEVE MARTIN

LOOKING out over the East River from my jail cell, and still running for public office, I realize that I have taken several actions in my life for which I owe public apologies.

Once, I won a supermarket sweepstakes even though my second cousin was a box boy in that very store. I would like to apologize to Safeway Food, Inc., and its employees. I would like to apologize to my family, who have stood by me, and especially to my wife Karen. A wiser and more loyal spouse could not be found.

When I was twenty-one, I smoked marijuana every day for one year. I would like to apologize for the next fifteen years of anxiety attacks and drug-related phobias, including the feeling that when Ed Sullivan introduced Wayne and Shuster he was actually signalling my parents that I was high. I would like to apologize to my wife Karen, who still believes in me, and to the Marijuana Growers Association of Napa Valley and its affiliates, for any embarrassment I may have caused.

I would also like to mention a little incident that took place in the Holiday Inn in Ipsilante, Michigan, during that same time. As I was lying in bed in Room 342, I began counting the ceiling tiles. Since the room was square, it was an easy computation, taking no longer than the weekend. As Sunday evening rolled around, I began to compute how many *imaginary* ceiling tiles it would take to cover the walls and floor of my room. When I checked out of the hotel, I flippantly told the clerk that it would take twelve hundred and ninety-four imaginary ceiling tiles to fill the entire room. Two weeks later, while attempting to break the record for consecutive listenings to "American Pie," I realized I had included the *real* tiles in my calculation of imaginary tiles; I should have subtracted them from my total. I would like to apologize to the staff of the Holiday Inn for any inconvenience I may have caused, to the wonderful people at Universal Ceiling Tile, to my wife Karen, and to my two children, whose growth is stunted.

Several years ago, in California, I ate my first clam and said it tasted "like a gonad dipped in motor oil." I would like to apologize to Bob 'n' Betty's Clam Fiesta, and especially to Bob, who I found out later had only one testicle. I would like to apologize to the waitress, June, and her affiliates, and to the DePaul family dog, who suffered the contents of my nauseated stomach.

There are several incidents of sexual harassment I would like to apologize for:

In 1992, I was interviewing one Ms. Anna Floyd for a secretarial position when my pants accidentally fell down around my ankles as I was saying, "Ever seen one of these before?" Even though I was referring to my new Pocket Tape Memo Taker, I would like to apologize to Ms. Floyd for any grief this misunderstanding might have caused her. I would also like to apologize to the Pocket Tape people and their affiliates, and to International Hardwood Designs, whose floor my pants fell upon. I would especially like to apologize to my wife Karen, whose great understanding fills me with humility.

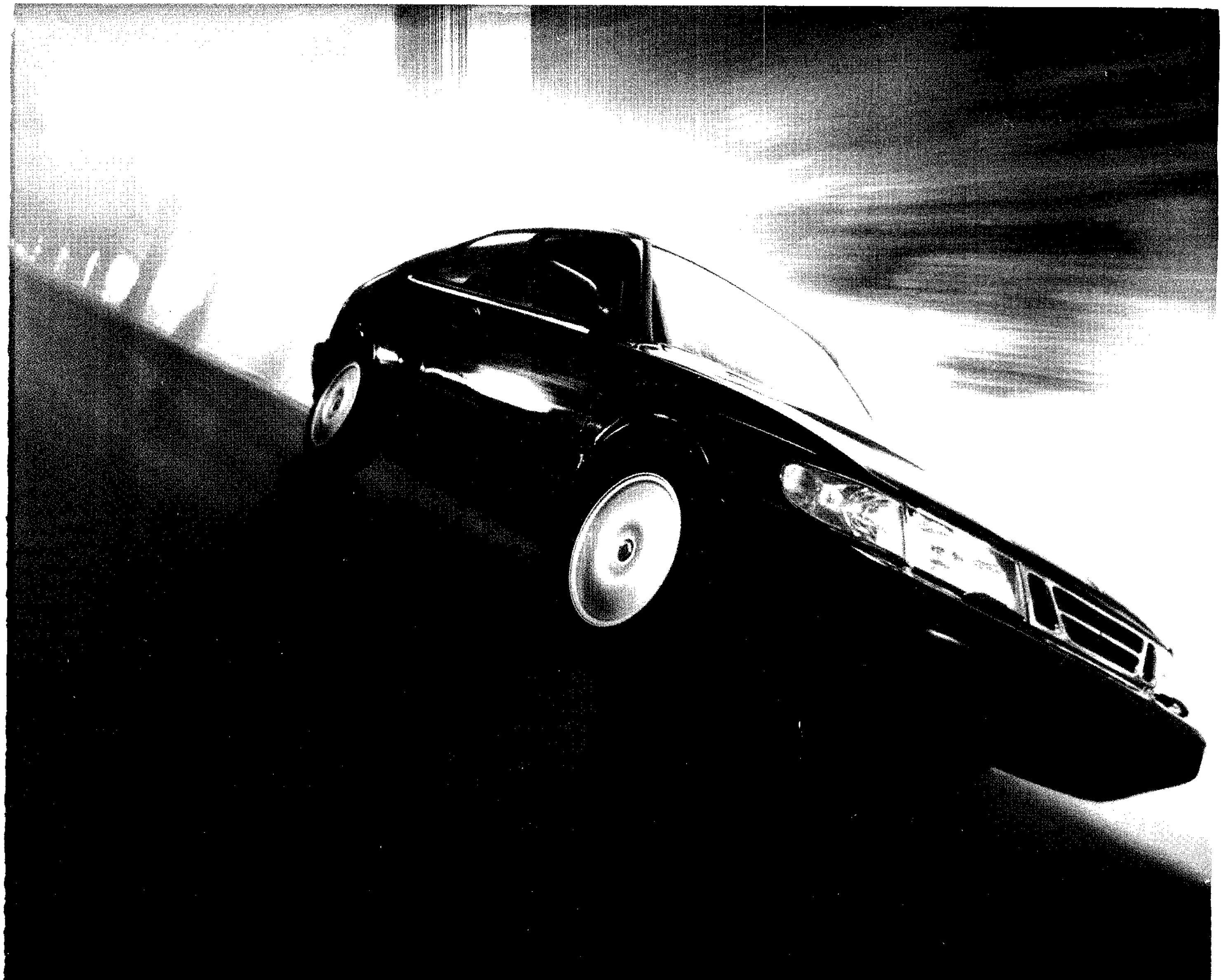
Once, in Hawaii, I had sex with a hundred-and-two-year-old male turtle. It is hard to argue that it was consensual. I would like to apologize to the turtle, his family, the Kahala Hilton Hotel, and the hundred or so diners who were eating at the Hilton's outdoor café. I would also like to apologize to my loyal wife Karen, who had to endure the subsequent news item in the "Also Noted" section of the Santa Barbara Women's Club Weekly.

In 1987, I attended a bar mitzvah in Manhattan while wearing white gabardine pants, white patent-leather slippers, a blue blazer with gold buttons, and a yachting cap. I would like to apologize to the Jewish people, to the state of Israel, to my family, who have stood by me, and to my wife, Karen, who has also endured my seventeen affairs and three out-of-wedlock children. Further, I would like to apologize to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, for referring to its members as "colored people." My apology would not be complete if it didn't include my new wife, Nancy, who is of a pinkish tint, and our two children, who are white-colored.

Finally, I would like to apologize for spontaneously yelling the word "Savages!" after losing six thousand dollars on a roulette spin at the Choctaw Nation Casino and Sports Book. When I was growing up, the meaning of this word in our household closely approximated the Hawaiian "Aloha," and my use of it in the casino was meant to express "Until we meet again."

Now, on with the campaign! ♦

TIM MOORE



FIVE SEATS. ONE STEERING WHEEL.
THIS COULD BE A PROBLEM.

You're halfway through the curve and though you can feel the G-forces pushing, your 900 SE holds like it's on rails. Deeper into the throttle, the turbo kicks in, propelling you into the next corner. "Now we're having fun," you think. And apparently your friends feel the same. The decent thing to do is give each a turn. Yes, that would be nice of you. "Fat chance," you mutter silently.

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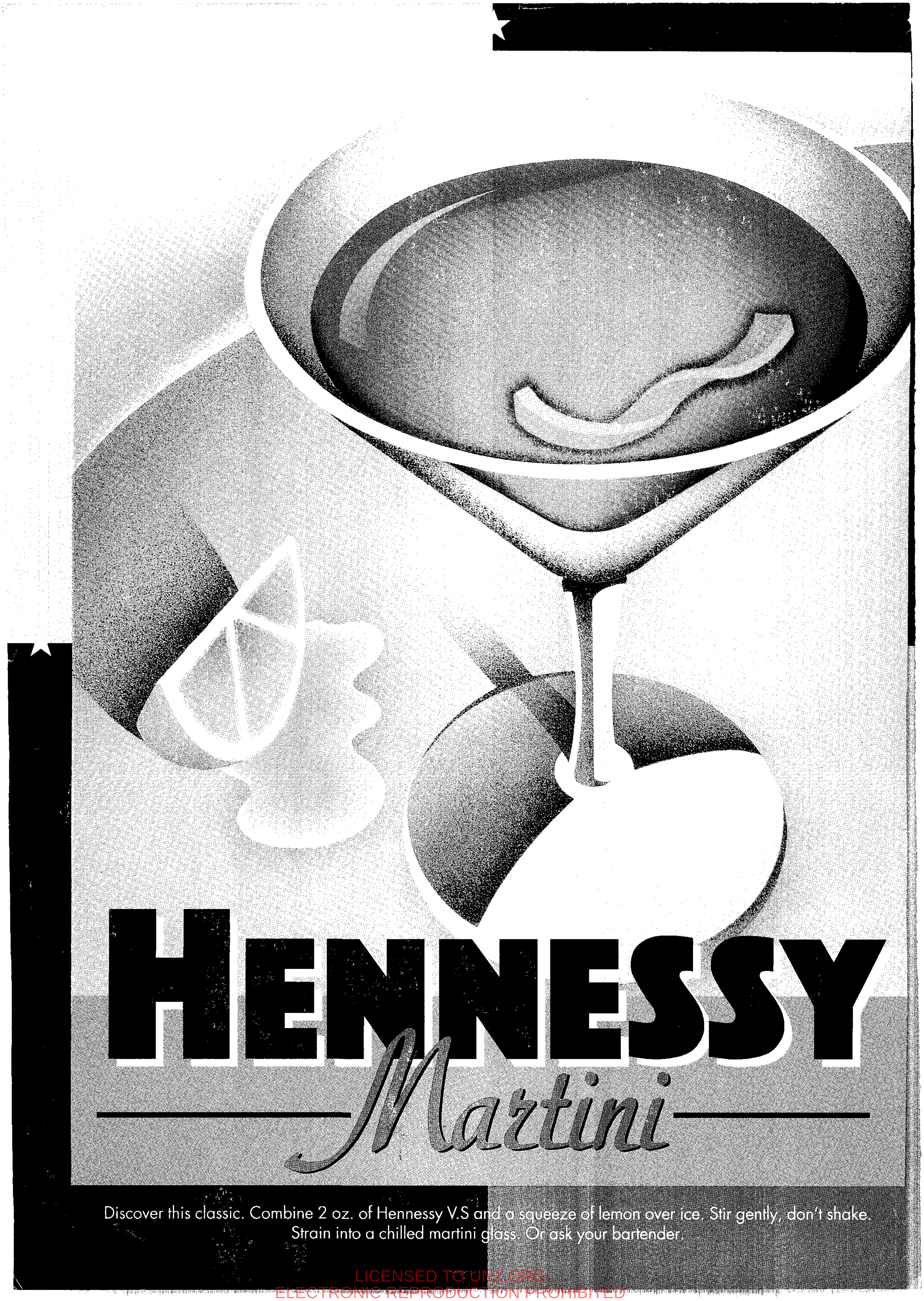

HENNESSY
Martini

Discover this classic. Combine 2 oz. of Hennessy V.S and a squeeze of lemon over ice. Stir gently, don't shake. Strain into a chilled martini glass. Or ask your bartender.